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ACCULTURATION STUDIES OF NORTH
AMERICAN INDIANS: A CRITIQUE OF THE
UNDERLYING FRAMEWORK AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

by



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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Acculturation Studies of North American Indians: A Critique of the Underlying Framework and its Implications" submitted by Max Hedley in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

Underlying much cultural anthropology is a perspective which assumes homogeneity of interests and normative integration, and which emphasizes stability and continuity over time. This orientation is epitomized in acculturation studies, and one aim of this thesis is to establish its existence and content.

In the context of a critical assessment of the normative focus (especially the role of values) and dualism of acculturation studies, it is suggested that the latter provide a distorted view of reality. Commitment to this perspective has resulted in an inability to deal with conflicting interests, problems of power, and anything but gradual, small-scale change. Furthermore, instead of providing an adequate basis for understanding contemporary social issues (such as the persistent poverty of North American Indian people) it tends to both limit discussion and distort perception of them. In effect it embodies a particular unrecognized conservative viewpoint which inevitably locates the cause of the problems faced by Indian people in the Indian community itself.

The influence of cultural factors upon cognition has long been recognized in anthropological thought, yet anthropologists have not systematically turned this insight

towards their own work. Instead they have tacitly assumed that the structure of thought in their own discipline is somehow immune from cultural influences. Consequently there has been no recognition of one of the central findings of the sociology of knowledge, that science itself is unavoidably influenced by social and historical reality.

To understand the fact that persistent use has been made of the conceptual framework underlying acculturation studies despite the obvious triviality of its results, it is essential to take the social environment of anthropologists into account. Situational factors outside the context of enquiry have been of crucial importance in the uncritical acceptance of the acculturation perspective.

The uncritical acceptance of the basic assumptions and ideas embodied in acculturation studies (e.g. assimilation, dualism, normative focus) is related to an ideological tendency of many anthropologists to assume that North American society is homogeneous, classless and mobile. This is reinforced by the effect of career exigencies within the academic environment, which can be seen as contributing to an acceptance and elaboration of traditional modes of thought. Complementing this are two widely held beliefs which detract from critical self-awareness by anthropologists. The first is a form of empiricism which assumes that there is a world of facts that can be reached without any a priori conceptions on the part of the observer.

Secondly it is assumed that anthropology is, or should be, "value free". Together they obscure recognition of the fact that the perspective underlying acculturation studies embodies a particular viewpoint, and that as with any perspective the knowledge derived through it is partial.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The specific concern of this thesis is with acculturation studies of North American Indian people. However, these studies epitomize a general tendency in anthropology for attention to be directed towards small communities which are then treated as though they could be understood as existing in isolation from their wider context. This tendency involves other assumptions, among which are homogeneity of interests, value consensus as the basis of integration, and an emphasis on continuity and stability over time. Consequently there is no place for the existence of conflicting interests, and there is a lack of concern with problems of power and therefore an inadequate basis for the analysis of change. Furthermore, instead of providing a basis for understanding contemporary social issues, it tends to limit discussion and distort perception of them.

Although epitomized in acculturation studies, these assumptions are coherently related to each other, and form a general approach or framework of ideas which is of more general significance to anthropology than is immediately apparent. In the mid-1950's, for instance, Redfield regarded it as the dominant reality for North American anthropologists (1965:6), and Worsley points out some of

the detrimental consequences of retaining this approach in the study of underdeveloped societies (e.g. that attention on these isolates results in a neglect of the modern sectors of those societies and a failure to understand the significance of a wider context) (1970:2). At the time of their inception acculturation studies did not involve a radical break from the mainstream of anthropological thought (Kroeber, 1963) but they constituted an extension of an existing body of concepts into what was seen as a new problem area. Furthermore, the use of the acculturation framework has not been confined to anthropology; for example, Frank considers it to be one of the three major theories in the field of development (1967:45). It can be seen, therefore, that a critical analysis of the acculturation framework has a significance beyond the acculturation studies themselves.

Nevertheless, acculturation studies were important in their own right, and still are to a considerable extent. Developing in the 1930's, by the early 1950's they had come to dominate the study of social, political and cultural change in all the principal world areas (Herskovits, 1952:52). Such studies remained dominant through the 1950's, although since then they have declined in popularity. Despite their decline, however, there are many studies that continued to use the framework in the 1960's (e.g. Dohrenwend and Smith, 1962; McFee, 1968;

Bushnell, 1968).

Acculturation studies were extremely popular, and anthropologists attached considerable significance to them. They were seen as a means of studying change in process, rather than after the fact (as was the case with diffusion studies). They were considered to provide an opportunity for revealing universal laws of change. Furthermore, the field situation and access to historical documents were seen as introducing controls which facilitated comparison, and which led anthropologists to liken the situation of an acculturation study to the laboratory of the natural sciences (Herskovits, 1955:523; Beals, 1953:627; Kroeber, 1963:235).

Acculturation studies are of considerable practical importance in addition to the theoretical significance attached to them. Historically anthropology has been more heavily concerned with the contemporary situation of North American Indian people than has any other discipline. It has consequently been through the conceptual apparatus of anthropology that the situation of Indian people has been understood. More important, acculturation studies have been the chief means of analyzing their contemporary situation.

Although anthropologists may not have been as influential as they may have liked, they have been directly

involved in the "administration" of North American Indian people (Provinse, 1954; Kluckhohn, 1947). The assumptions embodied in acculturation studies have entered into the planning and administration of Indian life. For example, the recent Indian Policy statement of the Canadian Government (1969) is based on the assumption that Indian people are not yet part of Canadian society. This assumption finds ready support in the dualistic framework of acculturation studies.¹

Apart from their relationships with Government, anthropologists appear to have had a direct influence upon the thinking of Indian people. For example, Vine Deloria suggests that many Indian people have taken over an image of themselves, provided by anthropologists, as being a folk people caught between two cultures. The effects of holding this belief are seen as detrimental, as it is used by the Indian people as a rationalization for their own failures, thereby helping to block their development (1970:87-8). Significantly, the assumptions behind this viewpoint are themselves part of the acculturation framework.

Despite their widespread popularity among anthropologists and the importance attached to them, acculturation

1. It does not necessarily follow that the assumptions shaping Indian Policy were directly derived from acculturation studies, but at the very least they can be seen to provide ideological support for them.

studies failed. The 1936 Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation¹ (referred to here as the 1936 Memorandum) sought to assess the work already done, and to provide a basis for directing further investigation (1936:149). Despite the considerable amount of work done after the 1936 Memorandum was drawn up, it became apparent that knowledge from acculturation studies was not cumulative in character, and that the field was characterized by what the Social Science Research Council Seminar on Acculturation² (referred to here as the 1954 S.S.R.C.) termed a theoretical lag. The 1954 S.S.R.C. attempted to provide the theoretical basis for overcoming this lag, but without success. A decade later acculturation studies were still unable to produce any meaningful results (Dohrenwend and Smith, 1962: 30; Hackenberg, 1962/3:237).

The continuing significance of acculturation, both within the discipline and externally, justifies a

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1. The 1936 Memorandum defined acculturation as comprehending "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (1936:149). There is no discussion of the definition in the Memorandum, the remainder being an outline meant to aid the classification of studies already made.
 2. Adopting a more organic approach than the 1936 Memorandum, the S.S.R.C. defined acculturation as changes initiated by the contact of autonomous cultural systems. In this framework discussion focused on four main aspects of acculturation: 1) properties of the cultural systems in contact, 2) nature of the contact situation, 3) analysis of relations between systems in contact, and 4) studies of cultural processes emanating from contact.

critical analysis of acculturation studies. It could perhaps be argued that attention should be turned towards developing a new theory and not towards criticism of a framework that has so little value. This does in fact seem to have been the general attitude, for the decline in popularity of these studies has not been accompanied by any attempt to explain their failure. This reflects a general tendency in anthropology to adopt what Manners and Kaplan call a "slash and burn" technique in theory building (1968:11), which involves the rapid use of many theories and their rejection without establishing the real basis of their limitations. A drawback of this approach to theory is that failure to identify the reason behind poor results increases the probability that the same mistakes will occur again. Assumptions and ideas which may cause the failure are left unexamined, and may therefore enter into alternative approaches and cause their failure too.

AIMS

Despite a long period over which various attempts have been made to revise acculturation studies, it is suggested here that there is an essential continuity throughout the development of acculturation studies, based upon a set of underlying ideas common to them all. The first aim of this thesis will be to establish the nature of this conceptual framework and to show that attempts to overcome the repeated failure of acculturation studies did not entail a

departure from, or even a questioning of, this basic framework. In doing this, it will also be suggested that this conceptual framework epitomizes a particular orientation to social phenomena distinctive of North American cultural anthropology, and that although starting from a different analytic focus there is considerable degree of convergence with much sociology and British social anthropology. This will serve to bring out the wider relevance of subsequent criticisms.

It has already been indicated that there have been a considerable number of acculturation studies, and consequently that selectivity must be imposed on the material used. The 1936 Memorandum offers a convenient base line from which to begin analysis, as it was the first systematic attempt to clarify the concept of acculturation. It is from the 1936 Memorandum, or rather from the work of its authors which is reflected in it, that the basic conceptual framework which provided the guidelines for subsequent research emerged. Subsequent studies will be mentioned to illustrate the framework's continuity, although in this context a heavy stress will fall on the 1954 S.S.R.C.. This seems justified because the latter was a direct response to the shortcomings of the 1936 Memorandum, and of all revisions it appears initially to be the most radical break from the basic framework. The most recent attempt to overcome the problems of the acculturation framework, by

Dohrenwend and Smith, will only be used in a supportive manner, as their suggestions are based on an acceptance of the S.S.R.C.

The fact that the critical attention given acculturation studies did not challenge their underlying framework suggests that an explanation of their failure lies in the fact that anthropologists neglected to direct their criticisms at the framework itself. Their criticisms took the framework for granted. The second aim of this thesis will therefore be to show how and why the basic framework of acculturation studies provides an inadequate basis for the analysis of the contemporary situation of North American Indian people. In doing this, it will be suggested that adherence to the framework has led to a misinterpretation of their situation, and to an inability to consider questions related to conflict, power differences, and structural change. It will also be suggested that the framework fails to answer, or even to pose, significant human questions concerning North American Indian people in anything but a very limited and one-sided way.

Once it has been established that the basic conceptual framework of acculturation is inadequate in this regard, and that it has in fact resulted in a distorted analysis of the contemporary situation of North American Indian people, attention will be turned to the failure of anthropologists to fundamentally assess the framework, and

their prolonged acceptance of it. The final aim of this thesis will therefore be to consider the question of why anthropologists have generally uncritically accepted the underlying conceptual structure of acculturation studies.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ACCULTURATION FRAMEWORK: ITS BASIS IN THE DISTINCTIVE ORIENTATION OF NORTH AMERICAN CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Acculturationists have periodically recognized that acculturation studies fail to live up to the expectations held of them, and have consequently made critical attempts to overcome their deficiencies. Their criticisms and subsequent modifications have, however, been of a very restricted nature, for with few exceptions they have not challenged the basic framework itself, but have instead been contained within it. There have been critical acculturationists, but they were acculturationists nonetheless.

It is the purpose of this chapter to show that attempts to revive acculturation studies and transcend the triviality of their findings have amounted to the elaboration of a framework whose basic form is identifiable in the 1936 Memorandum. Concern will not be with tracing the actual emergence of the acculturation framework per se, but with analyzing it to establish what its basic elements are, and to show that the principal attempt to reformulate acculturation studies (namely the 1954 S.S.R.C., and other studies only to a lesser extent) did not entail any radical departure from this basic framework. This will provide the basis for arguing in subsequent chapters that acculturation studies failed despite attempts to improve them, because

the framework within which these attempts were made rests upon postulates and assumptions which cannot be justified.

The essence of definitions of acculturation delineating it from other studies of cultural change is the idea of changes induced by the contact of two or more cultures.¹ This does not of course differentiate acculturation from studies of diffusion, which in their theoretical assumptions were considered to be similar, differing only methodologically (Kroeber, 1963:233-5; Herskovits, 1938:15). The idea of contact implies the delineation of two sets of variables, those internal to the cultures in contact, and those concerned with the contact situation itself. The conditions of contact will not receive much attention here, as the way in which they can be conceptualized depends upon the way in which internal conditions are construed. Furthermore, as the idea of contact will itself be subject to criticisms in the following chapter, there is little to be gained in analyzing the way contact conditions have been portrayed.

In directing attention towards the way in which culture is portrayed in acculturation studies, it is necessary to mention Spindler's observation that the images of

1. See footnote (1) on page 5 for Memorandum definition. Two of the authors later modified their acceptance of it, but retained the idea of contact (Linton, 1940:464; Herskovits, 1938:11). Subsequent studies have all tended to accept the idea as basic (S.S.R.C., 1954:974; Dohrenwend and Smith, 1962:30; Vogt, 1957:139).

culture used in the 1936 Memorandum and the 1954 S.S.R.C. differ considerably from one another. The former is seen to be using an "atomistic" image of culture which stresses the mechanical movement of traits between cultures, while the 1954 S.S.R.C. uses an "organic" image of culture, and describes the movement of traits in terms of the adaptation of an organism (1959:38).

The outline of the 1936 Memorandum does reflect the atomistic image of culture which was characteristic of the formative years of historical particularism, although this atomistic emphasis was under critical pressure in the 1930's from Boas (1930:268) and other anthropologists who were beginning to hold the conviction that culture was something more than the summation of individual parts (Hofstadter, 1955:169). As will be shown below, the authors of the 1936 Memorandum did not hold an atomistic image of culture, but instead they saw culture in a way that was nearly identical with that found in the 1954 S.S.R.C., this being reflected in their Memorandum.

Social Relationships

A start to understanding the conceptual framework of acculturation studies can be made by looking at the meaning attached to the concept of society, for this will at once help to clarify the distinctive orientation of North American cultural anthropologists that entered into

and conditioned the development of acculturation studies. It is useful in this respect to look briefly at the position generally taken by sociologists and British social anthropologists so as to bring into sharper focus the distinctive orientation of cultural anthropologists and acculturationists.

In a general sense, society is defined by sociologists and British social anthropologists in terms of a system of social relationships. The latter are taken to exist when there is evidence to suggest that one actor expects certain behaviour of another¹ although there is no consensus on this point. For instance, Radcliffe-Brown operated with a more restrictive definition of social relationships, taking them to exist only if there is an adjustment of interests between actors - interests implying purposive behaviour (1957:43). As such they identify a persistent relational aspect in social behaviour whose presence is inferred from qualitatively varying modes of concrete behaviour.² This is necessary because, apart perhaps from

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1. Rex (1961) suggests the presence of the following implies a social relationship: A's purpose or interests, A's expectations of B's behaviour, B's purpose and A's knowledge of this, the norms which A knows B to accept, and B's desire to win A's approval.
 2. "Anthropologists do not observe social relations; they infer them from physical acts" (Firth, 1963:22). "In identifying any relationship, we already abstract from the qualitatively varying modes of behaviour in invariant relational aspect - the linkage between the people they signify" (Nadel, 1964:224).

strictly utilitarian relationships based upon a clearly defined purpose (Nadel, 1964:224), the actual behaviour of individuals in a particular relationship may vary considerably.

A fundamental concept in this approach is that of social structure. This directs attention towards the interconnectedness of social relationships, forming a systemic whole, and thereby to the possibility that activities in one set of relationships may have consequences which are felt in other relationships. Definitions of social structure vary considerably. For instance, Firth restricts the term to relationships that tend to be permanent in society, regarding the essence of the concept of social structure as those social relationships without which society would not exist in its present form.¹ In contrast, Nadel provides a more restricted definition, tied to the concept of role.² It can be noted that the fundamental importance attached to the concept of social structure is in marked contrast to the general practice of cultural anthropolo-

1. "The essence of this concept lies in those social relations which seem to be of critical importance for the behaviour of members of the society, so that if such relations were not in operation, could not be said to exist in that form." (Firth, 1963:31).

2. "We arrive at the structure of a society through abstracting from the concrete population and its behaviour the pattern or network (or "system") of relationships obtaining between actors in their capacity of playing roles relative to one another." (Nadel, 1964:225).

gists where it has generally been subordinated to the concept of culture.

Culture in this approach is seen as a set of rules, norms and prescriptions for action, which are not studied in themselves, but in the context of social relationships. They are significant only to the extent that they can be shown empirically to have some bearing on action within these relationships. In as much as this position is taken, and social structure is inferred from actual behaviour, the approach excludes a particular usage of the concept of social structure which lays stress upon the expected or ideal relations between persons and groups. In this other view, which corresponds to the approach of cultural anthropologists and is used in acculturation studies, society is given its form by the idealized beliefs held by members of a society regarding what ought to be done in a particular relationship (Firth, 1963:30). It assumes that actual behaviour is a reflection of standards socially set.

It can be noted, however, that even if the social structure is inferred from actual behaviour, this orientation can still result in a position similar to that rejected by Firth if normative elements are stressed when explaining behaviour in social relationships. This position is implicit, for example, in Towards a General Theory of Action where Sheldon suggests that most behaviour to a

greater or lesser degree is determined by "cultural heritage" (Sheldon, 1951:40).¹

Basic Framework

The orientation of American cultural anthropologists emerging in the 1930's and entering into acculturation studies is quite different, although there is some convergence. Instead of representing society in terms of a system of social relationships, it is defined as an aggregate of individuals who live and work together, whose co-operative behaviour is defined and made possible by their cultural heritage. This reflects an orientation which does not place social relationships at the centre of analysis, but instead focuses attention on historically transmitted action patterns or cultural patterns, which define the course of man's behaviour in society. Concern is with the internal structuring of these patterns, logically or in terms of means/ends, and their relationship to each other in a wider unity. This is what sociologists generally understand as the concern of anthropologists.

However, at the emergence of the 1936 Memorandum, culture was considered to be more than a set of ideal patterns held by members of a society; it referred also to the behaviour of individuals in society. Culture was seen

1. This point will be raised again in the discussion of the 1954 S.S.R.C.

as the

"ideal, norm, average, or expectable
behaviour of all members of a fairly
small, simple, independent, self-
contained, and homogeneous society"
(Steward, 1951:374-5).

Society is seen as an aggregate of people, and the way they behave is their culture. Culture was not merely something acquired, a set of ideal behaviour patterns, but it was also the behaviour of the people who acquired it (Spiro, 1951:21). Moreover, in equating actual behaviour with transmitted behaviour patterns, a cultural determinist position was adopted, as it was thought that these patterns directed and controlled individuals' behaviour.¹ Thus when acculturation is defined by the 1936 Memorandum as being concerned with changes in cultural patterns, and by the 1954 S.S.R.C. as being concerned with customs, it can be taken to mean both changes in the culture patterns themselves and concomitant changes in actual behaviour. This general orientation, in which behaviour is seen as being determined by, or confined to, culturally defined behaviour patterns, will be referred to as a normative perspective. This term can also be usefully employed to refer to an approach which, while focusing on social relationships, emphasizes the importance of culturally defined rules,

1. This is the case whether anthropologists were realists, idealists, or nominalists (Spiro, 1951:24). E.g. Linton, a cultural idealist, saw culture as a set of ideal behaviour patterns, while Herskovits, a cultural realist, saw culture as actual behaviour (Bidney, 1967:24). In the final analysis, however, both saw behaviour as being determined by ideal behaviour patterns.

customs, norms, etc., in determining the course of action in that relationship.

The immediate question that is raised within the context of the normative perspective which entered into and conditioned the development of acculturation studies is in what sense were cultural behaviour patterns held to determine the individuals' behaviour? It is straightforward enough to assume that cultural behaviour patterns are learned by the individual members of a society, but it does not then follow that these ideas would direct the course of the individuals' actual behaviour. The solution to this problem then adopted was to endow these patterns with a moral imperative, so that cultural patterns not only represented what is, but also what ought to be (Spiro, 1951: 32). Unless the particular response was habitual, the individual was seen to adhere to cultural patterns because he experienced them as moral imperatives.¹

What is involved in this approach can be seen in Linton's analysis of reciprocal behaviour. If individuals are to coordinate their behaviour effectively, reci-

1. "Culture is felt as something coherent, integrated, and normally accepted as right" (Kroeber, 1963:94).
"Most people in organized society behave the way they do because they feel they ought to" (Spiro, 1951:32).
"Human beings have to become psychologically structured in such a way as they "want to act as they have to act" and at the same time find gratification in acting in accordance with the requirements of a culture" (Hallowell, 1953:661).

procal behaviour must somehow be structured.¹ This structuring is achieved through the individuals' adherence to the "ideal patterns" or norms of a particular culture, or to the configuration of rights and duties ("statuses") which make up polar positions within these ideal patterns. The sum total of ideal patterns "controlling" individual behaviour constitutes a social system whose parts must be mutually adjusted if the society is to function effectively (1936:105). Ideal patterns are learned during the process of enculturation, although adherence to them is not simply a matter of habit, but is considered within that culture as a matter of duty (1936:106). Similarly, Herskovits saw behaviour as being regulated by an internalized set of norms or cultural patterns which the individual felt obliged to adhere to, at least where conscious of them (1955:330-347).

This implies that the personality of the individual becomes structured in such a way as to ensure his conformity to culturally prescribed patterns of behaviour. In fact, the efficacy of this structuring was such as to allow Linton (1936) to suggest that other mechanisms to control individual behaviour and ensure conformity were not necessary. Furthermore, as the individual's goals were held to be culturally determined, it could also be assumed that he

1. For Linton this means that individual and group "needs" are met (1936:91-112). In either case, needs can only be met through cooperation with others, hence it is important that reciprocal behaviour be structured.

found gratification in adhering to cultural patterns of behaviour, as it was only through adherence to these patterns that goals could be achieved.

Apart from determining actual behaviour, cultural patterns (and therefore the behaviour of individuals in a society) came to be seen as forming a harmonious, integrated whole.¹ This raises the question of the basis of cultural unity: in what sense was culture construed as being an integrated whole? The integration that anthropologists had in mind was of a "psychological" nature (Linton, 1936: 94) as it was achieved in the minds of the individual members of a society (Aberle, 1957:315). This position is reflected in the references in the Memorandum to the psychological selection and integration of traits under acculturation (1936:152), and even more clearly in the reference to "adaptation" which involves

"a reworking of the patterns of the two cultures into a harmonious meaningful whole to the individuals concerned, or the retention of more or less conflicting attitudes and points of view which are reconciled in everyday life as specific occasions arise." (1936:152)

1. E.g. Herskovits, disregarding Lowie's qualification that cultural unity was a hypothesis subject to proof or disproof (1937:227), was prepared to state categorically that the "fact of cultural unity is established" (1955: 429). Boas stated that "The various expressions of culture are clearly inter-related and one cannot alter without having an effect on all the others" (1932:256), Linton that "Culture is a configuration of mutually adjusted parts" hence the "introduction of new elements upsets the balance" (1936:347-8), and Redfield that "Culture is an integration of conventional understandings" (1942:238).

This almost suggests that the authors of the 1936 Memorandum considered that culture in its totality was learned by every individual in a society, perceived by them as a meaningful whole.¹ However, this was not the case, as both the Memorandum itself and the individual work of its authors refer to the varied enculturation experience of different members of a society resulting from differentiation based upon age, sex, occupation, and so forth. Yet despite these different enculturation experiences, diverse cultural patterns somehow still were seen to make up a harmonious whole.

The difficulties raised by differential enculturation were overcome by postulating the existence of a basic set of motivations shared by all individuals in a society, either consciously or not, which governed their behaviour in a wide range of situations. Although they did not specify the behavioural content in a particular situation, they nevertheless acted as unconscious censors of choice which limited the type of responses that could be chosen from available alternatives. In this way, an overall unity and coherence was imparted to individuals' behaviour.

1. This particular approach has been criticised by Wallace who refers to it as the microcosmic metaphor and suggests that it implies a false equivalence between concepts on different levels of abstraction, that it cannot account for the considerable variability in personal characteristics, that social life does not require a high degree of conformity to universalistic norms (1961:87-88).

These underlying psychological motivations were then generalized to the cultural level, giving the whole culture a psychological unity, an underlying structure, which integrated every diverse culture pattern into a meaningful whole.¹ Cultural unity is therefore explained by the orientation of individuals who share a set of basic motivations, consistent among themselves, to which all behaviour is subordinated. This position is essentially that of early culture and personality studies, where such concepts as "basic personality structure", "modal personality", and "character structure" were seen as the counterparts of wider cultural configurations (Lindsmith and Strauss, 1950:588). In fact, they seem to be more than counterparts, as these elements are derived from the same empirical referent; they are duplications of the configurational aspect of the culture concept (Nadel, 1951:406; Wallace, 1961:85).

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1. E.g. Herskovits refers to the psychological unity of a culture as its system of sanctions: "The underlying drives, motivations, unconscious systems of meaning that govern the reactions of a people" (1955:425). For Linton "it is this psychological and emotional unity, the esprit de corps, which ensures common emotional reactions and makes the individual ready to sacrifice his own interest to those of the whole" (1936:93). Similarly Opler's "themes" (1945), Kluckhohn's "covert culture" (1947) and Gillin's "controlling mental patterns" (1949).

Aberle suggests that the tendency to search for underlying structures in a culture was a result of the influence of linguistic models in anthropology (1957:306).

The problem of explaining cultural unity was solved, then, by what amounts to an elaboration within the normative perspective. For apart from the individual's being committed to specific behaviour patterns, he takes over in the process of enculturation a set of motivations which constrain his behaviour to certain limited alternatives. When he is faced with alternatives to choose from, his action pattern is determined by this basic motivational system, thereby ensuring that conflicting behaviour is minimized.¹ The motivations were considered to be shared by all members of a society, and thus could be seen as a cultural pattern which united all cultural patterns into a meaningful whole. In other words, culture was organized on a basis almost identical to that of personality.

Subsequent developments of the idea of a psychological unity of a culture have been couched in terms of values. The term is not synonymous with configurations, themes, etc., but its basis is the same.² Values, like

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1. When conflict does occur, it is likely to be within the individual's personality (Linton, 1936:361).
 2. This equivalence is explicitly suggested by Spindler, who states that the concept of basic personality can be described in terms of the values and attitudes underlying the concrete patterns of culture (1957:151), and also by Wallace who finds that the only difference between values and psychological constructs is that the former "appeal to anthropologists who are not comfortable with personality psychology, and that it has provided a substitute for national character studies" (1961:102). For Kluckhohn, "values include the implicit cultural premises ("configurations") governing ends and means and the relation between them" (1951:422).

a basic motivational system, give unity to a culture and are basic aspects of personality conditioning individuals' behaviour.

A definition of values which brings out this overlap is provided in Towards a General Theory of Action, an attempt to provide a theoretical basis for unifying all the social sciences:

"A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from the available modes, means and ends of action" (Kluckhohn, 1951:395).

Values, like underlying drives and motivations, are not necessarily directly observable, but have to be inferred from the behaviour of the members of a society (Kupferer, 1963:192; Kluckhohn, 1951:396; Blake and Davies, 1964:467). The search for values underlying diverse behaviour can be seen as an attempt to reduce the behaviour to a few actually existing principles or motivations which explain that behaviour.¹ In other words, values (whether implicit or explicit) are held to actually exist within the individual,

1. "Operationally, the observer notes certain kinds of patterned behaviour. He cannot "explain" these regularities unless he subsumes certain aspects of the process that determines concrete acts under the rubric "value"." (Kluckhohn, 1951:396). "Behaviour, though perceived as a series of responses, is always based on a system of values" (Spiro, 1951:32). Ethos is the "system of ideals and values that dominate the culture and so tend to control the type of behaviour of its members" (Kroeber, 1963:102).

and are the prime determinants of his behaviour, or at least ensure that the selection from alternative modes of behaviour is limited. Not only do they explain the individual's behaviour, but they are also held to be key factors in explaining the integration of a culture system and its stability or continuity over time, when the culture must be either logically consistent or meaningfully congruent. For instance, Gulick argues that the cultural traits associated with conservative Cherokee are underlain by a set of values and attitudes which render them consistent (1960:152).¹ In terms of individual cultural behaviour, this harmony ensures that conflict is absent, for unless the individual has somehow become enculturated with values contradicting those of his culture there is no basis for conflict; the ends and means of his behaviour are culturally defined and rendered consistent by values.

Explicit references to values or psychological unity are meagre in the 1936 Memorandum, being confined to an outline of one of the results of acculturation (viz. "acceptance"), and to a cryptic reference to "cultural focus".² This does seem to suggest, however,

1. Similarly Pueblo culture has been portrayed as being integrated by a harmonious set of values, pervading and homogenizing world view, ritual, art, social organization, economic activity and social control (Thompson, 1945:540-3)
2. "Cultural focus designates the tendency of every culture to exhibit greater complexity, greater variation in the institutions of some of its aspects than others...these focal aspects are often used to characterize cultural wholes" (Herskovits, 1955:485). It introduces a "needed psychological perspective" to studies of change (1955:496)

along with the work of Linton in The Study of Man (1936), that the presence of an underlying system of motivation was considered relevant to the processes of acculturation. For example, Linton lays great stress on the presence of this system of motivation, regarding it as a necessary condition for the unity and stability of a culture, and therefore of man's behaviour in society. Moreover, in Linton's view it is only through such psychological unity that culture could be seen as a harmonious integrated whole, through which conflicting behaviour between individuals could be avoided.

Change

Acculturation is concerned with changes induced by the contact of two or more autonomous culture systems. However, the framework as outlined puts severe restrictions on the way change can be handled, for it is better suited to handle stability and continuity. The "normal" operation of enculturation processes ensures that the individuals' personalities will be structured in such a way as to guarantee adherence to culturally defined patterns of behaviour. Since cultures are satisfying to the individual members of a society, how can the fact that change occurs be explained?

It was suggested earlier that the focus of acculturation studies was on cultural behaviour patterns (which became more or less synonymous with actual behaviour) and

not upon the relationships between individuals. As a result, change could not be seen as a product of changing relationships, but rather in terms of changes in cultural behaviour patterns. The significance of this is that since cultural patterns do not change in their own right, the analysis of change and the search for laws of change become focused on the individual cultural carrier, hence the laws of change were expected to be psychological laws.¹ In view of this, the relevance of conditions of contact was reduced to little more than an accident of history. In one sense cultures are seen as cultural mosaics made up of elements which to a considerable extent are of external origin. It is in determining the source of new elements and the chronology of their appearance and acceptance that historical reconstruction was considered a vital part of acculturation studies (Herskovits, 1955:472-3). However, the problem of understanding why new cultural elements were accepted into a culture, and the effects they had on existing elements, was not to be found in the qualities of the contact situation, but in psychological processes, although these processes may be influenced by the type of

1. Analysis of change requires "a penetrating study of the individual under the culture in which he lives" (Boas, 1930:269). Cultural change is "a matter of change in the knowledge, attitudes and habits of the individuals who compose a society" (Linton, 1936:468). "The only instrument through which change in a culture can be achieved.. is..the individuals who compose the society where a way of life is undergoing change" (Herskovits, 1955:485).

contact situation. This leads to a position in which the central problems of acculturation are the conditions and processes involved in learning, and their effects on the way of life of the people concerned (Hallowell, 1945:316). It is this general position that allows Herskovits to say that contact in the contemporary colonial situation is in essence the same as that occurring since recorded history began (1952:48). It is also on this basis that he can argue that acculturation studies differ only methodologically from studies of diffusion,¹ and that they differ from other studies of change, not in terms of the processes involved, but in that the frame of reference is restricted by the notion of contact.

Basically, then, processes of change revolve around the conditions of acceptance or rejection of new cultural traits. This raises a difficulty already mentioned, namely that if enculturation worked perfectly, the individual would tend to reject all new cultural items, since his needs are already being satisfied; he has a built-in interest in maintaining the status quo. One way out of this impasse is to assume that cultures are not completely satisfying, perhaps as a result of imperfect encul-

1. Studies of diffusion have to assume historical contact on the basis of the existence of similar traits, whereas studies of acculturation have historical control and one can directly observe the contact situation. It is on the basis of this distinction that diffusion and acculturation are considered separate areas of study (Herskovits, 1952:58; Kroeber, 1963:28).

turation, or that there exist some open-ended needs which can never be sated. Linton seems to find himself in a biological-reductionist position in this respect, for he postulates the existence of three general needs which, although their content is culturally specific, are common to all mankind and which are never fully satisfied; individuals are therefore always motivated to consider acceptance of new cultural elements, and will accept them whenever it is to their obvious advantage (1936:468).

It is, then, the individual who chooses whether or not to make the changes in his beliefs and attitudes which could lead to cultural change. But this choice is not without constraint, as the unrestrained pursuit of self-interest would be detrimental to the unity and stability of a culture. In the normative framework of acculturation studies there is no problem in seeking the basis of constraint, as it is necessary only to be reminded of the extent to which an individual's personality has taken over his cultural heritage. It can therefore be assumed that the basis upon which the individual selects new cultural items is strongly influenced by his cultural experiences (Herskovits, 1955:482). The particular features of enculturation, based on such variables as age, sex, occupation etc., are all seen as having some bearing on the process of acceptance and rejection. Acculturationists have been unable to come to any precise conclusions about the way

in which such differential enculturation effects these processes (Wallace, 1961:128), but nevertheless do generally agree that values which all members of a society have are of fundamental significance.

In the process involved in accepting or rejecting new cultural items, values are seen to act as psychological screens (Wallace, 1961:129). In making a choice, values ensure that the individual's pursuit of his own self interests does not jeopardize the cultural integration and the well-being of society, as they allow the acceptance of only those items which are compatible with the existing value structure. (They play the same role in relation to internally induced change). By acting as censors, moreover, values not only ensure stability and unity in a culture, but also import some directionality to the process of change.

By elevating values to a key role in mediating change, it can be noted that structural change (which in the framework outlined means changes in values) is virtually excluded. In fact, it is not clear why values should change at all, as they are treated as independent variables, yet it is normally assumed that they may change. This is clearly indicated, for instance, in the Memorandum's outline of acceptance, where both overt cultural patterns and values are said to have changed. But when it does occur,

change is slow, for values are the most stable elements of culture and as such provide a convenient explanation of the resistance of cultures to change in the face of considerable external pressure.¹ Alternatively, if acculturation pressure is so great as to somehow force values to change, then the result is likely to be cultural disintegration.²

Attempt to modify the basic framework

The way in which the 1954 S.S.R.C. differs most from the 1936 Memorandum is in its use of an organic analogy as a means of understanding culture. In the cultural "organism", parts are inter-related in a way which maintains the system as a whole in equilibrium. Culture is an autonomous system which is maintained in equilibrium by the operation of "boundary maintenance mechanisms" and self-regulating mechanisms which, although not absolutely preventing change, tend to preclude it.³

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1. "The widest and most useful generalization anthropologists can provide to administrators" (Kluckhohn, 1947: 229).
 2. Nash uses the collapse of cultural values to hypothesize an explanation for the appearance of deprivation and the rise of nativistic movements (1937:120).
 3. Two other elements which are usually associated with the organic analogy (the presence of needs of the whole system and the processes of need satisfaction) are not discussed in the S.S.R.C., though their presence can be inferred. E.g. values are seen as integrating a culture which if subjected to undue pressure may disintegrate. Thus values can be taken to be a prerequisite or need of the system and the processes by which they are inculcated and reinforced can be regarded as a mechanism by which these needs are satisfied.

This organic unity seems on the surface to be quite different from the psychological unity of the 1936 Memorandum. However, this apparently radical difference is of little significance, for it is the result of attempting to reason by analogy rather than a fundamental change in the concepts used. The easiest way to bring this out is to look at the internal structure of the system. However, in doing so it must be pointed out that the 1954 S.S.R.C. did not develop very clearly the way in which culture was structured and its parts inter-related; it was perhaps a result of reasoning by analogy only.

It was suggested earlier that an alternative to the orientation which concentrated on behaviour patterns per se was that generally adopted by British social anthropologists and sociologists, in which analysis is focused upon social relationships. It was in terms of this latter orientation that the application of the organic analogy was considered appropriate. Since it seems likely that the authors of the 1954 S.S.R.C. were influenced by the application of the analogy in this context, it is reasonable to expect that they too would have adopted an approach which focused on social relationships, thus differing considerably in approach from the 1936 Memorandum.

Apart from using the analogy itself, the 1954 S.S.R.C. does show some signs of adopting a focus on

social relationships. For example, it does raise the possibility of a conflict of interests between groups developing in a society (p.977). In contrast, such a position was impossible within the "harmonious meaningful whole" of the earlier Memorandum. Psychological or value unity guaranteed that emotional reactions would be common to all members of a society. In other words, the 1954 S.S.R.C. seems to be attaching some importance to the way in which individuals or groups act towards one another in social relationships, as conflict might arise and be a source of change within the system despite the presence of culturally defined behaviour patterns.

The importance of this distinction in the S.S.R.C. is, however, reduced to a secondary position. For example, the possibility of group conflict as a potential source of change having once been suggested is then denied, for it is assumed that there are countervailing forces operating which maintain the social order.¹ This may in part be the result of using an organic analogy, but more important this conflict is insignificant because of the normative perspective used in the S.S.R.C.

Two elements, social structure and values, are

1. "Set against these disruptive tendencies is the complementary one which asserts that there must be counter forces at work sufficient at least to maintain the patterns of a particular social order" (S.S.R.C., 1954: 977).

considered in the 1954 S.S.R.C. to be vital to the integration and stability of the cultural organism. As indicated above, in the S.S.R.C. values underly all behaviour, which in this context would include the relationships between men, giving them stability and ensuring the coherence of patterns governing them. On the other hand, the concept of social structure has not been attributed with much significance by North American anthropologists. But although it is not explicitly defined, the concept of social structure used in the 1954 S.S.R.C. does not correspond to that used by sociologists and British social anthropologists (see above p. 13). Instead of being inferred from actual behaviour, the concept of social structure in the S.S.R.C. seems to refer to an idealized configuration of rights and duties which define the way in which individuals do and should act towards each other. Like Linton's social system, they are in one sense a cultural blueprint laying down the behaviour patterns which define the appropriate actions in a relationship, and at the same time elements of them (statuses) have become constituent parts of the individual's personality; adherence to them is either felt as a moral imperative, or it is at least satisfying.

In the discussion so far, it has been assumed that the 1954 S.S.R.C. has constantly used social relationships as the focus of analysis, thereby reflecting the influence of sociology and British social anthropology.

Despite this apparent difference in focus, the perspective which emerges does not seem to differ to any great extent from the perspective associated with the 1936 Memorandum. This similarity is implicit in the foregoing outline of the 1954 S.S.R.C., for it appears that even if the focus of analysis is upon social relationships it is their normative elements ("idealized" social structure, values, etc.) which are emphasized in the analysis. If these ideational elements are the main determinants of the structure of social relationships, then obviously a study of these elements themselves is all that is needed. This differs only slightly from focusing on cultural behaviour patterns per se; since these two aspects were equated with actual behaviour, they govern men's behaviour towards one another by implication.

It could be argued that this similarity results from a convergence between the approach to the study of society adopted by sociologists and British social anthropologists and that adopted by North American cultural anthropologists. This seems feasible because British structural functionalists and an important segment of North American sociologists operate within a normative perspective. For instance, Gluckman suggests that the purposes of man, and the means by which he achieves them,

"are defined by a set of controlling
rules and guiding beliefs and values"
(1968:220).

The normative elements (or what British social anthropologists call the cultural elements) of a social system are given priority in analysis. Similarly, the structural functionalism of Parsons and his followers focuses on the normative aspects of the social system.¹ Values along with the standards and rules which govern relationships determine the course of action in the social system, gaining their efficacy through being learned by the actor and associated with the appropriate need-dispositions that ensure his conformity to these cultural blueprints. As Kluckhohn stresses in a footnote to the general statement in Towards a General Theory of Action, the social system is built upon the "girders" of implicit and explicit culture (1951:27).

However, the emphasis in the 1954 S.S.R.C. upon normative elements is not so much a matter of convergence towards an approach which focuses on behaviour patterns as such, as of a failure to break away from it. Despite

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1. This is suggested, for instance, in the priority given to values in Towards a General Theory of Action:
"With the institutionalization of culture patterns, especially value-orientation patterns, in the social structure, the threefold reciprocal integration of personality, social system, and culture comes full circle. Such value patterns, institutionalized in the social structure, through the operation of role mechanisms, and in combination with other elements, organize the behaviour of adult members of society. Through the socialization process, they are in turn constitutive in the establishment of the personality structure of the new adult from the plasticity of early childhood" (Parsons and Shils, 1951:27).

mentioning the relevance of relations between groups in society, they do not develop this line of thought, for their subject matter is the "autonomous culture system" and when they mention relationships, values and social structure they are talking about elements of the cultural system. Yet culture seems to be equated with a body of custom which is carried by individuals as members of a society (society in the sense of an aggregate of people) (p. 975) as is the case with the perspective associated with the 1936 Memorandum. Similarly, individuals are the mediators of the cultural process, and customs which shape men's behaviour are the subject matter of acculturation studies.

The reason why the 1954 S.S.R.C. gives the appearance of having shifted the focus of acculturation studies is in its use of the organic analogy, with which it is possible to talk of adaptation, system maintenance, etc.. Much of the discussion is in terms of the analogy, but once an attempt is made to see how the analogy is applied to social phenomena it appears that the focus, though confused, is the same as that of the earlier Memorandum. Finally, the failure of the members of the 1954 Seminar to relate the analogy to reality is reflected in one member's concluding comments, where he (Barnett) criticises the document for its reification of culture (1954:1001).

The inability of the 1954 S.S.R.C. to break away from the general framework which was emerging from the 1936 Memorandum can be clearly seen in the analysis of change. The field of study is still defined as changes emanating from the contact of two or more cultures, although now these are referred to as "autonomous cultural systems".¹ More explicitly, acculturation is concerned with the changes that occur in the "body of customs" which govern the behaviour of individuals living together in a society, although like the 1936 Memorandum it points to the individual who has to make the changes and is at the root of acculturation processes.

In the contact situation, an intercultural role network develops which provides the framework within which individuals (the culture carriers) are exposed to aspects of the alien culture, and through which new cultural items are transmitted. As in the 1936 Memorandum, the variables governing the presentation and selection of cultural elements are complex. While the Memorandum barely mentions

1. The essential similarity of what anthropologists "normally" call culture and autonomous cultural systems is explicitly stated in the S.S.R.C. when they equate the latter with what "is usually called" a culture "in the anthropological literature" (1954:974). The advantage of the new term is seen to be that "it at once makes the concept more definitive and delimits the incidence of acculturation as defined" (p.974). It rules out the possibility that acculturation might be confused with internally induced changes, and prevents the inclusion of such phenomena as urbanization.

the role of values in this process, however, the S.S.R.C. explicitly makes them the most important variable governing the conditions of acceptance and rejection. Values act as a perceptual screen in the individual, and in terms of cultural integration are seen as operating with "gyroscopic like qualities" (p. 985). In the individual, they result in an "enthusiastic acceptance or firm rejection" of potential cultural elements, and they govern the processes by which new elements undergo transformation while being fitted into the existing culture. Their presence stabilizes the culture system undergoing change, and conditions the rate and direction that cultural change will take (p.985).

This position is qualified to some extent, as it is assumed that the smooth operation of values might be disrupted by the use of force by a dominant culture, and this would result in cultural disintegration - a breakdown of the normative order.¹

A consideration of the long-term consequences of acculturation processes also reveals the underlying similarity of the 1936 Memorandum and the 1954 S.S.R.C. In assessing the outcomes of acculturation, rather than the

1. This should not be taken as evidence to mean that the S.S.R.C. managed to conceptualize such phenomena as force and power struggles. It only gives the impression of saying something meaningful about them, because the language is couched in terms of the organic analogy; for example, when the autonomy is threatened "a system may respond belligerently" (1954:987).

process involved in reaching those outcomes (such as syncretism, reinterpretation, etc.), it is evident that underlying the bulk of acculturation studies is the assumption that cultures in contact will become progressively similar (Kroeber, 1963:236; Watson, 1963:357). With this assumption and the acculturation framework in mind, there are only two logical outcomes of acculturation processes:

In the terminology of the S.S.R.C., the first of these is "Assimilation" (referred to as "Acceptance" in the 1936 Memorandum), which involves the more or less complete replacement of one culture by another.

Alternatively, the outcome might be "Fusion" (called "Adaptation" in the Memorandum) where both cultures lose their original independence and identity, and coalesce into a new culture system integrated on a basis different from that of either of the original cultures.

A third possible outcome is suggested by the 1954 S.S.R.C., namely "Stabilized Pluralism". But this does not represent a significant departure from the 1936 Memorandum, as it refers to a case of "arrested" fusion (p.970). It is a residual category which could easily be inferred from the 1936 Memorandum, as it applies to instances in which acculturation pressures have been temporarily resisted, thereby facilitating the continued exis-

tence of the cultures in contact.

Finally, within this framework both documents refer to "Reactive Adaptation" (1954:987) or "Reaction" (1936:152), which refers generally to Nativistic movements. These movements are seen in the framework as little more than epiphenomena, for they only affect the rate at which the processes of acculturation occur. For example, the Ghost Dance of 1890 is considered by Barber (1941) to be an attempt to restore an aboriginal way of life, and as such slows down the process of acculturation.

Despite appearances to the contrary, the 1954 S.S.R.C. did not depart significantly from the general framework of acculturation studies emerging in the previous two decades. Its formulation does seem to have been strongly influenced by the structural functionalism of British social anthropology and North American sociology, as evidenced in the heavy use of an organic analogy. Using this analogy gave the impression of a radical reorientation, but it was employed within the context of a cultural focus and not a focus upon social relationships. Hence when the analogy is stripped away, the underlying continuity with the 1936 Memorandum becomes apparent. It can be pointed out, finally, that the most recent attempt to overcome the theoretical deficiencies of acculturation studies, made by Dohrenwend and Smith, takes the S.S.R.C. as its point of

departure, and the intention of these authors is not to question the basic framework but rather to operationalize the findings of the S.S.R.C. by introducing concepts at an "intermediate level" (1962:31).

Conclusion

The framework of acculturation studies is based entirely upon a normative perspective. Society is seen as an aggregate of individuals whose behaviour is controlled by cultural patterns, which define specific courses of behaviour, and by a largely unconscious set of mutually consistent values. Control in this sense means, above all, the development during enculturation processes of personality characteristics which predispose the individual to act in accordance with the dictates of his culture. Of secondary importance are mechanisms of social control for enforcing conformity to culturally defined behaviour patterns.

Culture is rendered a consistent, homogeneous whole by a set of values which underly and integrate diverse cultural behaviour patterns, and consequently the behaviour of men in society is guaranteed to be conflict-free. The 1954 S.S.R.C. in this latter respect goes beyond the authors of the earlier Memorandum, as conflict is seen there as a persistent feature in society, a consequence of imperfections in the enculturation process.

Such conflict is never sufficient to disrupt the stability or equilibrium of culture, as it is effectively controlled by "self-correcting mechanisms".

The analysis of culture change, emanating from contact, stresses the role of the individual as a culture carrier, and focuses on psychological processes of acceptance and rejection. Contact conditions, as well as differential enculturation experiences, are relevant to the process involved. However, as conceptualization of these two in relation to the psychological processes involved is lacking, heavy stress is allowed to fall upon the part played by values in the process. The latter, acting as censors, tend to control the processes of acceptance and rejection, by allowing the acceptance and directing the subsequent modification of only those items that are, or can be rendered, consistent with the existing culture. Values are therefore of fundamental significance to the framework, as they ensure cultural stability and govern the direction and rate of change.

CHAPTER THREE

CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE ACCULTURATION FRAMEWORK

The problem so far has been to bring out the basic conceptual framework of acculturation studies, and to show that despite modification over time this structure remains essentially the same. Attention can now be turned towards a critical assessment of the basic framework as outlined, with the aim of establishing its limitations in general, and more particularly illustrating its inadequacy as a basis for analysing the contemporary situation of Indian people in North America. In doing this, moreover, the extent to which uncritical adherence to the conceptual framework has inhibited recognition of the significance of certain characteristics of the situation of Indian people will be brought out.

Using the acculturation framework involves two assumptions; firstly that Indian people are not part of North American society but occupy autonomous cultural systems, and secondly that there is a persistence of elements of traditional native cultures (above all "Indian" values) which causes this separateness. The significance attached to these values is vital to the whole approach, for it is only by postulating their continued existence that the separateness of Indian groups can be understood in the

framework. The starting point in this analysis will therefore be to assess this aspect of the framework.

Role of values in the acculturation framework

With regard to the assumption that traditional Indian values persist and can be considered as the basis of cultural integration among Indian people, there are a number of studies which suggest on empirical grounds that this is not the case. For example,

"It appears that the legally defined group is not an identifiable group either as ethnically Ojibwa in the modern world or even as a society organized around more general Indian values" (Dunning, 1959:30).

Dunning generalizes from this study, arguing that reservations in Southern Canada, characterized by prolonged contact, are likely to be similar and therefore lacking any sort of traditional Indian value integration. Similarly, Vanstone sees the Snowdrift Chipewyan as a "deculturated" community, having lost aboriginal culture and replaced it with a Poor White type. He argues that this way of life is not characteristically Chipewyan, but exhibits a sort of "bush" culture common to many Northern communities (1965:113). Similarly, James argues that the Ojibwa have become deculturated, having lost aboriginal traits and replaced them with a Poor White type (1961:728) and Downes argues that although the Washo remain an identifiable "Indian" group they have lost their traditional culture and are assimilated

into American society, though at the lowest and least profitable level (1966:106).

Despite such objections it has still been argued that traditional values persist. This is made possible by accepting the position that values are not directly observable but have to be inferred from overt behaviour. In other words, although values are said to cause behaviour their presence cannot be validated independently of the behaviour they are meant to explain. This is clearly tautological, and values amount here to a reclassification of the behaviour and not an explanation of it. Unless this is recognized, any behaviour could be said to be evidence of the existence of unconsciously held traditional values.

An example of this position is the contention that the contemporary culture of the conservative Cherokee is integrated by the "harmony ethic" (Gulick, 1960:152; Kupferer, 1963:190). The presence of this ethic is said to ensure that individuals' behaviour towards one another is characterized by an avoidance of doing harm, and that aggressive behaviour is held in check. But neither Gulick nor Kupferer are able to provide evidence for the existence of this ethic other than the Cherokee's lack of aggression. In fact the question does not arise for them. Kupferer seems happy to simply infer their presence from

overt behaviour (1963:192), while Gulick, although expressing concern over the problem, nevertheless assigns the "harmony ethic" to the realm of the unconscious (1960:158-9). Such an approach is quite arbitrary. It would be equally justifiable to argue, for instance, that the lack of aggression is explained by the presence of what Linton called the "need for a favourable response" (1945:91). The main thing that Gulick and Kupferer accomplish is to reclassify the behaviour they were trying to explain.

The importance attached to the role of values in the acculturation framework is vulnerable to more fundamental objection. Even if it could be shown that individuals in a community do share a set of values, it cannot be assumed that these are the primary determinants of behaviour.

Adherence to the acculturation framework entails adopting the view that through the process of enculturation the individual learns the values and other elements of his culture, and (more significantly) that these values become constituent elements of his personality, and ipso facto behavioural imperatives. It will be remembered in addition that the focus of analysis in the acculturation framework was not upon the individual as an actor seeking to achieve the ends he values in a structure of social relationships. Rather, the focus is on cultural patterns which correspond

with actual behaviour. This means that, together with the assumption of value consensus, culture appears to be a harmonious meaningful whole from which conflicting behaviour patterns are absent. Consequently it is also assumed that the way behaviour is structured is such that the individual can behave the way he feels he ought to behave.

At the individual level of analysis, traditional values may be important, but it seems to be theoretically unsound to assume that their presence in fact determines the course of individual action. Liebow's analysis of lower-class Negro men is relevant to this point. He argues against a similar notion which stresses the importance of subcultural values as behavioural imperatives perpetuating poverty. Instead, their behaviour is explained

"as a direct response to the conditions of lower-class Negro life rather than as mute compliances with historical or cultural imperatives" (Liebow, 1967:208).

He sees Negro men as starting life with a set of values and goals which approximate those of the middle classes, but the conditions in which they attempt to realize these goals are inimical to their attainment. For instance, despite being motivated to work, they are able to secure only manual, low-paying jobs without security, and with no chance for advancement. Failure to improve their socio-economic status is not due to subcultural imperatives, but to the lack of appropriate employment opportunities which, al-

though shared by some other groups, is compounded by racist values and attitudes. So-called subcultural values and beliefs, he argues, are irrelevant to the causes of failure, and are best seen as attempts to rationalize it (Liebow, 1967:222).

This position seems to be equally applicable to North American Indian people. For instance, Downes argues that the Washo are assimilated, and at one point they were an important source of farm labour in the area. The application of new technological processes to farm production has changed this position by reducing the demand for labour, and creating a situation of unemployment. It can be assumed that these individuals were motivated to seek gainful employment, yet the lack of opportunity makes fulfilment of this goal impossible. This situation is also compounded by discrimination (1966:105).

This all points to the limitations of a view of man which obscures recognition of the fact that, although an individual does seek particular ends, he has to do so within an environment which may or may not facilitate their realization. There is no simple correspondence between the structure of a culture and the individuals' goals and values which ensures that they will or can be met. Moreover, the assumption that values, which are largely the product of early socialization, are an adequate basis

for understanding the individuals' adherence to particular behaviour patterns has yet to be proven. The position is restrictive, for it amounts to an a priori assertion that all subsequent experience of the individual is of secondary importance.

At a more general level, values occupy a pivotal role in the cultural system. They act as autonomous variables while they function to integrate culture into a harmonious whole and to control the processes of change. This raises the question of whether or not the importance attached to values as autonomous variables can be justified, assuming that their presence in a culture could be established. In as much as values are regarded as unconscious determinants of behaviour it is impossible to assess their importance, for acceptance of the role of values in the final analysis becomes an act of faith, subject neither to proof nor disproof. In order to develop criticisms further, this element of faith will be ignored, and it will be assumed that values are verbally expressed ideal standards to which a moral imperative is attached. With this qualification, the possibility that the culture of any society might include contradictory values can be raised without need for concern with the possible objection that these are underlain by more general, unobservable values. For example, it then becomes possible that there is one set of values supporting the status quo (ideology) while another

set challenges it (Wallace, 1961:131).

But the possible existence of contradictory values has no place in the acculturation framework, for their presence would remove the basis of stability and integration of the cultural system, leading to disintegration. Their presence is more easily handled in a frame of reference which focuses attention on social relationships, unless it were heavily normative. There they can be related to individuals' and groups' attempts to maintain or change their position in the structure of such relationships.

In such an approach, values can be seen as symbols of legitimation (Gerth & Mills, 1964:276) which serve to either justify or challenge the existing order. This does not mean that individuals do not accept them and believe in them, as in fact their efficacy as symbols of legitimation depends upon commitment to them. The point is that in such a framework there is no need to make the a priori assumption that value consensus is the primary determinant of social integration, or that the primary function of values is to maintain that order. Instead they can be understood in relation to ends sought by particular groups in society (which does not necessarily entail conscious manipulation of them, although it could) and their position in the structure of social relationships.

For example, the structure of social relations depicted in Maquet's (1961) study of nineteenth century Ruanda was characterized by a marked inequality in the distribution of the ownership of the means of production and of political power, these being concentrated in the hands of a small ruling caste, while members of other castes entered into feudal relationships with them. Supporting this structure were a set of beliefs such as the divine right of the dominant caste to rule, the myth of mobility, and the assumption of fundamental inequality, all of which legitimated the status quo. As the members of every caste accepted these beliefs, they can be seen as contributing to the maintenance of that particular structure of social relationships. This does not of course mean that they were primary elements in achieving integration and stability.

Another example of the legitimation function of values and one which brings out the extent to which their content might change while their function remains constant, may be found in Willhelm's analysis of the changing character of racist values in "White America". He suggests that although the expression of racism has changed in conjunction with changing economic circumstances it continues (in combination with economic motives) to form a value system which supports the nation's hold over its coloured population (Willhelm, 1967:14). Changes in the economic structure of North American society have been paralleled by

changes in the content of racist values. This position does not necessitate a simple mechanical determinism in which the actual content of the values themselves is directly determined by the economic structure of society. For example, the rebuttal by academics of evolutionary doctrines of biological inferiority can be seen as contributing to their demise, and shaping the content of the doctrine that took their place.¹

Alternatively, values may be interpreted in some circumstances as part of an attempt to challenge the legitimacy of the existing structure of relationships. It is perhaps in this sense that the "Indian Renaissance" (Lurie, 1970) should be interpreted. The importance of the revival of "Indian" values, customs, etc. is not simply a romantic attempt to conjure up the past (a "nativistic" movement), but part of an attempt to understand and challenge the present. Worsley interprets Messianic movements in this way, arguing that the term "nativism" used by Linton (1943) is inappropriate, for it interprets the values and beliefs of these movements as flights from reality. Worsley suggests that the importance of these values and beliefs lies not in their revival as such but as a reaction to foreign domina-

1. For example, having destroyed any notion of biological inferiority, social scientists replaced it with a viewpoint that "stresses intrinsic social laws". In other words, the outcome was the same, for these social laws came to "justify White America's treatment of Black America" (Willhelm, 1967:9).

tion, a search for more effective ways of controlling a changed environment (1957:228). Similarly Marx, referring to the revival of traditional ways during periods of revolutionary practice, suggests that it is

"precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their services and borrow from their names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured guise and this borrowed language" (Marx, 1968:15).

Although such phenomena as religious movements are seen by anthropologists as a reaction against oppression or deprivation (Nash, 1937:120; Barber, 1941:664), the acculturation framework facilitates only a limited interpretation of their significance. They are seen as either a flight to the past which retards the processes of acculturation and eventual assimilation, or they assist these processes by facilitating individual adjustment to psychological pressures that accompany acculturation. For example, the significance of Pan-Indianism is seen by Howard simply as an attempt to preserve aboriginal cultural patterns.¹ Such movements cannot, in the acculturation framework, be seen as more than attempts to preserve the past, as the framework stresses the autonomy and value integration of

1. Pan-Indianism is "one of the final stages of progressive acculturation, just prior to complete assimilation. It may best be explained as a final attempt to preserve aboriginal cultural patterns through intertribal unity" (Howard, 1955:220).

cultural systems. Consequently the values embodied in the beliefs of religious movements etc. cannot be seen as symbols of legitimation opposing the status quo or as contributing to the emergence of a Pan-Indian unity within North American society, for until assimilation has occurred Indian people are considered to be outside North American society.

The possibility that symbols of legitimation of Indian social movements, religious or otherwise, are part of an attempt within North American society to challenge the status quo is suggestive of the relevance of an analytic focus on social relationships. Instead of treating values as totally independent variables, they could instead be related to the structure of social action in a society. This would overcome a major deficiency of the approach to values adopted in the acculturation framework, namely the tendency to render them irrelevant to the context in which they are employed.

Such a possibility also raises the question of whether or not Indian people can be considered as integrated in terms of social relationships into North American society. If this is the case, the significance of traditional Indian values may have changed, as it could not be assumed that they are merely pre-contact survivals, for unless the aboriginal structure of relationships survived

their context and significance would have changed.

Dualistic focus

The tendency of the acculturation framework to direct attention towards finding persistent traditional cultural elements has contributed to an inability to recognize the significance of the integration of Indian people into the structure of social relationships in North American society. An obvious example of this integration is the confinement of Indian groups to reservations. This has of course been recognized, for the reservation has been the main area of study. But attention has usually been focused upon the Indian groups themselves rather than upon the reservation system. Consequently, relationships with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, missionaries, entrepreneurs, etc. have been treated as peripheral, or have been altogether ignored (Rosenthal, 1970:85) thus contributing to a very incomplete picture of the total community.

Moreover, in focusing attention on traditional culture, the acculturation framework hides the significance of normative features in the context of a wider network of social relationships. According to James, the Deerpoint Ojibwa have lost their traditional culture (being "deculturated") but the reservation community regards itself (and is regarded by Whites) as "Indian"

(1961:728). In the acculturation framework the tendency would be to explain this persistent identity in terms of a continuity of Ojibwa culture. If, however, this phenomenon is considered in the context of the community, "Indian-ness" can be seen as a stereotype applied to Indian families who are poor, regardless of the fact that the traditional culture is lost. Similarly Vanstone discusses the Snowdrift Chipewyan in this regard, among whom wealthy families are considered to be White-oriented, and poor ones Indian-oriented (1965:110). Being "Indian" is then a stereotype acting along "socio-economic class" lines (James, 1961:728). Furthermore, the identity involved in this notion of being Indian is not simply defined by the Ojibwa culture, but rather it is held by both Indians and whites, and it is in the context of relationships with whites that the elements of the stereotype enter into the self-image of Indian people.¹

Even the most conservative Indian groups on reservations cannot be understood solely in terms of attempts to maintain traditional culture, for these groups develop myths, cults, and so on to justify their separateness in

1. "The genesis of the modern Indian self lies in the social processes that constitute the reservation life ...(which would)...include among those processes such relationships as may have survived in the peculiar cultural environment furnished by the reservation" (Stern, 1966:265).

the context of reservation factionalism (Hickerson, 1967: 327).¹ There can therefore be no simple equation of pre-contact and contemporary Indian cultures.

The reservation or local community is not the only significant context that has been excluded from analysis by the acculturation framework. For example, the activities of the reserve superintendant cannot be fully understood at the local level, for they are clearly related to the bureaucratic structure of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, where many decisions having consequences for particular reservation communities are made completely outside that community (Stern, 1966:262).² Furthermore, these organizations are themselves forced to compete with other agencies and interests over the allocation of resources necessary for the discharge of their mandates,

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1. In levelling this criticism, Hickerson is directly opposing the idea of a "cultural gradient" (Hallowell, 1955: 334) which indicates the underlying persistence of an aboriginal personality. He suggests that "It is common knowledge that the "least acculturated" is significant under reservation conditions partly or chiefly in terms of factions" (Hickerson, 1967:326).
 2. Bureaucrats dealing with Indian people are likely to have a role set which includes other officials, members and representatives of pressure groups, parties, factions, political associations, religious bodies, etc. "Even at the lowest, local level, his behaviour is influenced by quite macroscopic national and international pressures, as well as by face-to-face interactions; the one is mediated through the other" (Worsley, 1965:387).

such as occurs when the Bureau of Indian Affairs must compete with such powerful interests as those of "oil and gas billionaires, lumber barons, ranchers and corporate farmers" (Cahn, 1969:157).

The need to overcome the dualism inherent in the acculturation framework is even more apparent when the extent to which Indian people have been incorporated into the economic structure of North American society is recognized. Such integration is by no means a recent phenomenon. For example, the involvement of Indian people in the fur trade of Eastern Canada became very important in the second half of the 16th Century (Innis, 1962:12). Trading was eventually extended to the interior, and despite the fact that the Indian people of North Saskatchewan have been for the most part engaged in subsistence activities, they have been involved in the economy of both Canada and, via the fur trade, Europe for over two hundred years (Worsley et al., 1961:4). In this context, it can be pointed out that the fur trade involved more than direct relationships of Indian people with Whites, as the former were also involved as middle-men (Innis, 1962:201). In terms of acculturation, this is important for it throws into doubt the simple dichotomy of pre-contact/white-contact, as the effects of the fur trade on Indian groups did not require White contact.¹ For example, changes in Algonquin social organiza-

1. To a considerable extent "the distinction between pre-

tion during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries derive from the influence of the trade in fur, mediated through pressures from other Indian groups (Fisher, 1968:224).

A general feature of economic relationships, especially in the contemporary situation, is the characteristic lack of power on the part of the Indian people to exert control over such relations. Thus in Canada, apart from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the fur trade was controlled by large organizations, from the monopolies of New France to the North West and Hudson Bay Companies (Innis, 1962:386). Consequently the Indian trapper was forced into a dependent relationship with a local monopoly. The use of a system of extended credit often resulted in a relationship of total bondage (Hawthorn, 1966:62). A similar dependency relationship developed in other primary resource based industries in which Indians tended to concentrate labour (Hawthorn, 1966:62). The particularistic focus on cultural units means that the acculturation framework is unable to provide an adequate basis for analyzing the effects on the culture of Indian people of entering into such relationships. At least, such relationships are seen as the means of transmitting

contact and post-contact Plains Indian society is spurious and misleading". "The peculiarity of Plains Indian society....is the result of the efforts of European groups to exploit this continent and the potential of those exploited, the Woodland Algonquins, to adapt or respond to exploitation" (Fisher, 1968:232-3).

new cultural items. Furthermore it results in an inability to consider the extent to which involvement in the North American economy by diverse indigenous groups may have very similar results in spite of initially differing circumstances (cf. Murphy and Steward, 1956:408).

In the contemporary situation many Indian people in search of a livelihood are forced to sell their labour in the national economy, usually at the lowest levels. Consequently they have the least power of anyone to change their own position, and are amongst the most susceptible to dislocation resulting from economic and technological changes. For example, the declining economic significance of the Washo as a source of farm labour, due to the application of changing production techniques, leaves them without opportunity to work and poverty-stricken (Downes, 1966: 98). Economic and technological changes over which they had no control had profound consequences for their way of life. Similarly, the abandonment of mining at Rankin Inlet due to rising costs and falling prices was a decision made outside the community itself. The consequences of economic dislocation, rising welfare dependence, forced migration, etc. felt by the local native community were irrelevant to the decision to end operations.

The dualistic emphasis of the acculturation framework, coupled with its cultural emphasis, does not

provide an adequate basis for conceptualizing these wider relationships or for understanding their significance. Furthermore, by focusing attention on the unique features of a particular cultural heritage, it fails to draw attention to the fact that the majority of Indian people in North America share in varying degree the economic marginality of the Washo, as do other so-called minorities (Downes, 1966:105), and that this reflects a widespread fall in the demand for unskilled labour in the North American economy (Willhelm, 1967:100). The dualism of the acculturation framework and its cultural emphasis focuses attention upon conditions of contact, in as much as they affect the acceptance or rejection of new cultural traits, but neglects completely the extent to which integration (in contrast to assimilation) into North American society has occurred. The structure of social relationships between the native and non-native populations, which cannot be handled within the acculturation framework, will clearly influence social learning. For example, the class structure of Northern communities¹ and the paternalistic behaviour of their white inhabitants influences the socialization of the Eskimo people (Vallee, 1967:127-131).

1. "In every Arctic settlement there is some measure of spontaneous segregation between Kabloona and Eskimo" which in settlements such as Rankin Inlet and Great Whale River is "reinforced by company rules" (Vallee, 1967:214).

A further limitation of the acculturation framework in focusing attention on the culture of a people is its inability to make any use of the concept of power,¹ an inability which reflects the state of anthropology generally (Wolf, 1970:17). In fact, when over-riding importance is placed upon normative determinants of behaviour, power becomes an irrelevant variable, for the behaviour of individuals in society is simply seen as being determined by the internalized cultural patterns. The framework could handle legitimate power, or authority within the status quo, by regarding the behaviour associated with it as voluntary, based upon a belief that it is in some sense "right". But social relationships must be taken into account when the concept of power is used, for it is in this context that the possession of powers is relevant; it has some bearing on whether or not individuals or groups are successful in realizing their ends. But even here, if the stress remains normative, power would still be largely irrelevant.

Yet to understand change (or the lack of it) among North American Indian people, it is necessary to take into account the degree to which they possess economic and political power. Certainly Indian people recognize this, as they are aware of the extent to which decisions

1. Power being regarded here as being the "probability that man will act as another man wishes" (Gerth and Mills, 1964:195).

affecting their lives are made by people over whom they have no control, and of the need to organize effectively to realize their goals (Cardinal, 1969:163).¹

Similarly there is an absence of conflict in the acculturation framework. Recent pressure by Indian groups to have their treaties honoured, and the failure of Ottawa to meet these demands, is obviously a conflict situation. The outcome of such a conflict, at least initially, is related to whatever economic and political power the Indian people have. The inability of the acculturation framework to conceptualize conflict is inherent in the framework, as culture is seen as a harmonious whole integrated by mutually consistent values. At best there could be conflict between societies, but there is no place for fundamental internal antagonism as an important source of change.

Conclusion: Assimilation and Poverty

Finally, to bring out more clearly the restrictive consequences of adherence to the framework of acculturation

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1. To reach their goals, Indian people must reach an understanding of the position they occupy in urban and national affairs. "Then they must become aware of the weak points where leverage and power can be combined to provide a means of pivoting the power structure that confronts them. Only then can they apply their power to the situation and contemplate significant results" (Deloria, 1970:250). Similarly, "The largest dimension of the power problem is the hard fact that we cannot achieve the goal of equal opportunity for all unless we accept a significant redistribution of power in its

studies, it is useful to analyze the way it limits our ability to understand a significant human problem, namely poverty - the most persistent reality of the Indian people (Cardinal, 1969:14).¹ This question is relevant because the acculturation framework is not only a theory of change, but also a theory of development or modernization, pointing to the processes by which Indian groups become more Western and therefore more developed (the validity of this ethnocentric assumption will be discussed in Chapter Four).

Assimilation as a solution to the problem of poverty is significant because it has underlain Government policy towards Indian people in the United States (Provinse, 1954:388) and seems to underly the 1969 statement on Indian Policy of the Canadian Government. This is to some extent disguised in the latter, as there is talk of an alternative to assimilation in the permanent reservation communities which are said to allow Indian people to play

"a full role in the Canadian Society and in the economy, while retaining, and strengthening, and developing in Indian identity" (1969:8-9).

"aspects of our social, political, economic and intellectual, as well as our legal existence" (Medicine, 1970:307).

1. There are difficulties in finding a widely acceptable definition of poverty, as an unavoidable element of evaluation enters in, but no matter how it is defined Indian people have long been amongst the economically most impoverished groups in North America (Meriam, 1928; Hawthorn, 1966; Brophy and Aberle, 1966; Canada, 1969).

This is ambiguous, for the policy statement recognizes that most reservations are too poor to be developed and that, coupled with population pressures, the demand on resources will not be adequately met, thus forcing Indian people to leave the reservations and migrate to the cities (1969:10). Where the Government sees this as differing from assimilation is not clear, especially as the thrust of the proposals is to abolish the special and therefore "unequal" status of Indian people.

From the perspective of the acculturation framework, the cause of the Indian people's poverty is the persistence of elements of traditional culture which prevent them from effectively participating in the "dominant" culture. For instance, Gulick (1960:158) and Kupferer (1963:192) attribute failure of the conservative Cherokee to improve their economic position to the persistence of the Harmony Ethic which is considered to be incompatible with participation in the market economy.¹

An acceptance of this position points to assimilation as the only solution to poverty, providing it is not to low-class culture, because the individual must divest

1. Strictly speaking, the acculturation framework offers an alternative explanation by suggesting that poverty will persist if Indian people become assimilated to wrong values, such as the so-called "present time orientation" of low-class whites. However, whether causality is attributed to traditional culture or low-class culture, criticism of the position is much the same.

himself of traditionally derived cultural behaviour patterns and accept those appropriate to success in the dominant culture.¹ As a result, adherents of the acculturation framework such as Fey and McNickle, 1959:197) reach a position of advocating that conditions should be created to induce Indian people to give up their traditional ways. Proposals to terminate reservations, or to abolish separate services, can be seen as attempts to create the conditions under which assimilation would be accomplished. In this view, to do otherwise and promote separateness is to assign Indian people to a position of inferiority and prolong their degradation (Manners, 1962:27).

A difficulty here is that there is no certainty what changes in the culture of Indian people need to be brought about. Deprez and Sigurdson suggest, for example, that for economic development involving reservation populations the most necessary step is to increase employment opportunities, and that formal education intended to "transform Indian youth" is a failure (1969:101). Levine pushes the point even further, for he suggests that in all important respects Indian values are compatible with North American values generally, and suggests that the solution

1. Another possible outcome of acculturation mentioned in Chapter Two is "cultural pluralism" or "arrested assimilation". However, with the latter the means of overcoming the problem of poverty which can be conceived by the acculturation framework remains much the same, as sufficient traditional culture would still have to be lost to allow participation as individuals or as a group in the North American economy.

to the economic problems of Indian people is already within their grasp; they simply have to pick up some skills and find work.¹

One way or another the whole problem in the acculturation framework is reduced to the question of learning new cultural ways. Yet as suggested earlier, Indian people have suffered economic dislocation and are in a situation where the demand for unskilled labour is declining (Willhelm, 1967: 21). Related to this, it has to be recognized that assimilation at least means entering a society characterized by permanent unemployment and a high level of poverty (cf. Harrington, 1963; Adams, 1970). Consequently even if Indian people were considered to be isolated from the wider society by traditional cultural differences it would not follow that assimilation would result in improved economic wellbeing. The latter is even less likely in view of the additional handicap of racial discrimination faced by Indian people.

These factors are ignored by the acculturation framework. Instead attention is directed towards values and other traditional elements and towards the separateness of Indian people. No attention need be directed at the

1. "...any Indian people who want assimilation have only to pick up a trade or skill, move to where the jobs are, and set to work" (Levine, 1970:33).

immediate social environment within which Indian people struggle to reach their goals, as it is above all the persistence of a cultural heritage that inhibits change. Moreover this concern with the past is in a sense ahistorical, for it assumes that the sequence of relationships that Indian people have had to enter into with non-Indians since the colonization of North America has not affected the contemporary Indian cultural heritage. This heritage is seen as having persisted in its essence from some pristine, pre-contact state. This whole position is reflected in a comment by Herskovits (mentioned in Chapter Two) that contacts occurring both now and since recorded history began have always been of the same order (Herskovits, 1952:48). In other words, social relations are irrelevant to cultural change.

If it is recognized that values, and traditional culture generally, are not simply persisting through time, and that their significance changes with the context of social action, then there can be no equating of contemporary Indian culture (even the most conservative) with pre-contact conditions. The sort of question that then becomes important is: What are the dynamics behind the development of the contemporary situation of Indian people? Or, more specifically, What are the conditions of North American society which create and maintain the inequality of all Indian people and many other North Americans? It is

questions of this nature¹ which the acculturation framework precludes.

1. Such questions have been raised, though not by acculturationists or anthropologists generally; for instance, Robertson says that "The Indian situation today is the product of a tight, closely supervised economic system, a system which not only produces the wealth of many Canadians, but also the destitution of the Indians" (Robertson, 1970:10). Similarly, Davis considers the Métis-Indian problem a Canadian problem, as it is "the economic and institutional order of urban-industrial society....which defines and produces the other Canada" (1969:109).

CHAPTER FOUR

SITUATIONAL INFLUENCES ON ANTHROPOLOGISTS CONCERNING THE ACCULTURATION FRAMEWORK

Because of certain fundamental defects in their underlying conceptual framework, acculturation studies have been unable to provide an adequate basis for analyzing the contemporary situation among North American Indian people. It cannot claim relevance to most questions of culture change. Indeed, commitment to the assumptions and ideas of the acculturation framework means that certain important structural features of the situation of Indian people are, a priori, excluded from analysis.

The significance of these criticisms can be appreciated when the prolonged influence of the acculturation framework on studies of North American Indians is recognized. Discussion began in 1931, codification of the problem occurred in 1936, and although the apogée may have passed during the 1950's the framework is still important. As yet there is no established alternative for studies of culture change in the modern world. Moreover, although the adequacy of the framework has been criticized by many because of its paucity of results, the basic underlying assumptions and ideas within the acculturation model have remained largely unquestioned. There have been some piecemeal modifications of the model, while many scholars have decided to drop the

entire framework. In either case the result is inadequate. The former facilitates the perpetuation of fundamental errors, while the latter does not guarantee that the same faulty assumptions and ideas will not be incorporated in some subsequent framework, thereby continuing to shape the development of anthropological thought on culture change. Finally, some of the criticisms of the acculturation framework and the limitations imposed by the scheme are relevant to other areas of social science as well as to anthropology generally, so their implications extend far beyond acculturation studies of North American Indian people.

Given the basic shortcomings of the acculturation framework and their consequences, it seems important to understand why, in studies of change among North American Indian people, anthropologists by and large remained committed to the framework for such a prolonged period. In seeking to understand this, attention will be turned to what Wolf terms "the sociology of anthropological knowledge" (Wolf, 1970:10).

Sociology of Knowledge

An important result of the failure to critically examine the bases of acculturation has been to restrict studies of change to problems related to acculturation, and prevent the recognition of significant alternatives. In order to appreciate the relevance of this adherence to

the perspective more fully, it can be shown how it has created and perpetuated biases in studies of cultural change.

It has long been recognized by anthropologists that differences in cultural background have a considerable effect upon the way the world is perceived. For instance, Lee suggests that one's own

"culture, with its laws of logic, its principles of cognition, its rigidly defined limits of validation, offers (one) a strongly bounded and pre-conceived view of reality (1959:2).

In fact, early anthropologists, recognizing the extent to which cognition is culturally determined, considered that one of the major benefits to be gained by studying other cultures is that it can then provide a basis from which to understand the cognitive limitations of one's own culture.¹

This was not considered to be without difficulty, for it was recognized at least in acculturative situations that the influence of the anthropologist's own culture may effect his ability to adequately describe ethnographic data. The difficulty was that in acculturation situations

1. For instance, Wissler argued that "one of the great values to be derived from the study of different peoples is the attainment of a perspective or horizon from which we can begin to see our own culture from the outside" (1923:4). Similarly, Kluckhohn felt that studying "primitives" enables us to see ourselves better, for ordinarily we are unaware of the special lens through which we look at life (1963:19).

the anthropologist was in danger of biasing his ethnographic description because of a tendency to take for granted and therefore fail to record elements of his own culture that had been incorporated into a new situation.¹

Despite this slight qualification, however, assumptions underlying anthropological thought seem to have led anthropologists to accept the contradictory belief that in collecting ethnographic data they could emancipate themselves from cognitive preconceptions, and collect "pure facts" (this extreme empiricism will be discussed below). Despite the fact that the essential theoretical knowledge of the influence that differences in cultural background have on cognition, anthropologists have not systematically applied this insight to their own activities (Harris, 1968: 290). In other words, the extent to which the conceptual framework of their own discipline may have distorted their own cognition has not been the subject of critical analysis. Consequently there has been a failure to recognize one of the fundamental findings of the sociology of knowledge,

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1. "For where European and Native cultures under contact are being studied, the elements from the student's own culture tend to be taken for granted by him. Hence this must be carefully guarded against lest the resultant ethnographic description be thrown badly out of focus" (Herskovits, 1938:18).
 2. "The essential theme of Mannheim's work is thoroughly at home in anthropological theory; that the whole fabric of institutions of a society must be intimately related to the dominant system of existential beliefs which, in turn, not merely rationalizes, but springs naturally from the exigencies of functional organisations. Thus a world view is....the very skeleton of

namely that:-

"Science itself is in the stream of social and historical reality, wherefore even in cases where the sincere effort towards unbiased objective knowledge cannot be denied, the available supply of terms, the techniques of questioning, the articulation and grouping of problems, may be responsible for distortions which can only be detected by means of intimate historical acquaintance with the correspondence between the development of science and the evolution of society" (Mannheim, 1953:193).

It is not individuals alone, but men in groups who share and develop a particular style of thought, a style which is related to their experience in a particular historic situation. Scientific thought is no exception to this, for it too is influenced by the particular social and historical position of the investigator. Consequently it cannot be assumed that anthropologists, despite the "advantage" of having studied other cultures, are able to emancipate themselves from those influences.

Calverton (1931) seems to have been the only North American anthropologist who has attempted to assess the extent to which situational factors have shaped the knowledge held by anthropologists.¹ He attempted to

concrete cognitive assumptions on which the flesh of customary behaviour is hung" (Wallace, 1961:101).

1. Wolf is an exception. This general lack of concern is reflected in the aim of his paper "not to defend a new interpretation of American anthropology but to generate an interest in the sociology of anthropological knowledge" (1970:10).

explain an uncontrolled tendency of nineteenth century anthropologists to analyze, in an evolutionary framework, the institutions of their own society, which were treated as absolute criteria for the interpretation of data (Calverton, 1931:1). To them, progress necessitated the attenuation of non-western institutions and the emergence of institutions based upon the Western model, which was supposed to be of a higher evolutionary order. An example of this tendency can be found in Westermarck's analysis of the evolution of the family which gained widespread acceptance in the academic community despite the presence of considerable evidence to the contrary (Calverton, 1931: 9).¹ In explaining this, Calverton was led to the conclusion that interests external to the context of enquiry were inadvertently shaping its outcome. These external interests, related to the individual's class and group position in society, resulted in a predisposition to accept certain ideas unquestioningly and reject others, thereby investing these ideas with a social content not present in the context of enquiry. It was the relevance of such theories to group interests rather than their truth value which made them so popular (1931:27). In terms of nineteenth century European society, he suggests that the widespread, uncritical acceptance of evolutionary doctrines,

1. Calverton did not seek to explain the origin of these evolutionary doctrines, but sought instead to explain their widespread acceptance.

such as Westermarck's, was due to its providing a justification of "progress" in terms of Western civilization, and a justification for the persistence of the status quo.¹

Generally anthropologists and other social scientists (Kaplan, 1964) have acted as though their work was immune from such influence. But unless one rejects the implications of the theoretical insights of anthropology and of the sociology of knowledge such a claim is untenable.

Situational influences on the framework

Turning now to acculturation studies, it is suggested that the persistent adherence of anthropologists to the acculturation framework despite the presence of contradictory evidence is a result of situational factors which contribute to a failure to subject some of the basic assumptions in the framework to critical assessment.

The influence of situational factors on the acculturation framework can be seen in the treatment of the

1. Hofstadter and Wolf reach similar conclusions about the acceptance of evolutionary doctrines in North America. "American society saw its own image in the tooth and claw version of natural selection, and its dominant groups were therefore able to dramatize their vision as a good thing in itself. Ruthless business rivalry and unprincipled politics seemed to be justified by the survival philosophy. As long as the dream of personal conquest and individual assertion motivated the middle class, this philosophy seemed tenable, and its critics remained a minority" (Hofstadter, 1955:201; Wolf, 1970:12).

"dominant society".¹ Since the framework stresses the idea of contact between two or more independent cultural systems, one would not expect analysis to be restricted to only one of them. However, acculturation studies of North American Indians have been based on the assumption that analysis should be limited to one system only, the aboriginal or Indian one (Hackenberg, 1962/3:235; Watson, 1963:357).² Nevertheless, assumptions about the nature of the "dominant system" unavoidably enter these one-sided studies. These assumptions seem to have been far more strongly influenced by the social background of the anthropologists than by an analysis of this system.

Although a survey of acculturation studies shown that anthropologists hold extremely varied conceptions of North American culture (Mason, 1955:1267), it can nevertheless be argued that most studies of acculturation assume that it is homogeneous (Kupferer, 1963:187). Acceptance of the assumption of homogeneity is facilitated by the stress placed on the importance of values in the accultu-

1. "A survey of the literature reveals that most students of culture contact have neglected to examine critically the character of the more familiar, dominant group, with a consequent incompleteness of the analysis and conclusions about the acculturation of the exotic group" (Mason, 1955:1264).
2. This tendency to focus attention on the aboriginal group alone has been a characteristic of North American anthropology (Redfield, 1965:6) and perhaps of anthropology in general (Worsley, 1970:2), and has led to a complete neglect of "modern sectors".

ration framework. Given this emphasis, North American culture can be characterized as homogeneous, based on the assertion that its members share a common set of values.¹ This view appears in acculturation studies. For example, North American culture is characterized in terms of values such as "freedom" (Dozier, 1957:159), "democracy" (Levine, 1970:16), and the "Protestant ethic" (LaViolette, 1961:161).

These examples bring out one of the difficulties of this approach, that of trying to come to an agreement over what these values are, and over what is their relevance to acculturation analysis. Consequently the results can become quite contradictory. For example, Bushnell argues that the continued existence of Indian groups is made possible because of the American value of "respect for differences" (1968:1114). Alternatively, Levine suggests that divergent values will only be tolerated if they do not threaten the wider society, and that anyway Indian values are essentially similar to American values (1970:16). Finally, Du Bois suggests that assimilation of diverse immigrant groups to middle-class values testifies to the compelling vigour "of a value system that lacks tolerance

1. This orientation is made explicit in Du Bois' analysis of the "dominant value profile of American culture" (1955:1237) and by Gillin who says the "continued existence of a modern complex cultural system can only be maintained if the bulk of the participants subscribe to such common goals" (1949:304).

for difference".¹

The limitations of this general approach were discussed in Chapter Two in the context of the traditional Indian culture; the foregoing only adds to the conclusions reached about the inadequacy of the approach. Of more importance here is to make the point that the notion of value unity, and therefore the notion of the homogeneity of North American society, is based on the assumption that there exists in every society a community of interests which can only be maintained through the active cooperation of all, an assumption widely held by social scientists.² This assumption has far-reaching implications for the acculturation framework, as by supporting the idea of value homogeneity it is ipso facto related to the framework's inability to deal with power differences and conflicts (discussed in Chapter Three).

Acceptance of this assumption is unwarranted. Apart from acculturationists' failure to provide any supporting evidence, the presence in North American society of political movements, trade unions, etc. suggests an

1. She suggests that "as resources and space were more fully manned, the very lack of tolerance for differences that facilitated assimilation was finally to curtail the admission to this country of those who present such differences". (Du Bois, 1955:1237).

2. For instance, it underlies much economics (Levitt, 1970: 20).

image of society which is marked by the existence of conflicting interests. This leads to the question of why acculturationists should have uncritically accepted and retained such a view. The answer suggested here is that the acceptance of this assumption was influenced by the social background of anthropologists. It appears to derive from what Du Bois calls the American middle-class belief in the value of "cooperation", which is one of the major assumptions held by North Americans about their society.¹

Attention can now be turned to two important elements of the acculturation framework, namely the ideas of contact and of assimilation. It was shown in Chapter Three that both these ideas are inadequate and provide a false picture of the contemporary Indian situation, and it is therefore relevant to ask why they persisted. It is suggested here that this can only be understood in terms of the influence of situational factors in anthropological knowledge.

In terms of the assimilation of Indian people, socio-economic advancement is seen to be open to them once the appropriate North American values have been adopted;

1. "In a society where cooperation and good citizenship are valued and where the common wealth is served by having each man develop himself through his own efforts" (1955:1237). Lynd makes the same point when he suggests that North Americans believe each man must stand on his own feet, fight for what he wants, and in this way "the common welfare of the entire culture is achieved" (1964:71).

the individual is then in a position to compete equally with all other members of a society. This position is usually qualified by an awareness by anthropologists that discrimination adversely effects this process. Nevertheless, it is thought that if racial discrimination were removed there would be no barriers to assimilation.

This position corresponds to a widely held belief by North Americans that their society is "open" and mobile, and that even the poor can "make good" if they try (Mason, 1955:1268). But this belief or ideal misrepresents the reality of North American society, where certain groups have long been "more equal than others". For example, Lipset and Bendix point out quite clearly that characteristics of the working class such as low income, inadequate education and housing create a series of disadvantages which considerably reduce the possibility of any upward mobility (1959:198). Conversely, the presence of a national upper class in North America, made up of rich businessmen and their descendants (Domhoff, 1967:160), is testimony to the advantages that individuals from such a background enjoy.

Failure to recognize the limitations of this position can be considered as part of an ideological tendency on the part of the North American middle class to deny the existence of social classes. The presence of

this tendency¹ not only helps to explain why the myth of mobility is so readily accepted, but also why anthropologists have accepted and maintained the idea of assimilation as a solution to problems faced by Indian people. The only way assimilation could have the effects expected of it is in a classless society, in which gradations in wealth provide no barriers or advantages to individuals who are motivated to succeed. The fact that North America is not a classless society supports the view that the notion of assimilation as used by anthropologists in the study of Indian people has proved persistently acceptable without scientific validation, because it fits into preconceived assumptions derived from the image of a classless society.

With regard to the idea of contact, the view that North America is a homogeneous, classless, and mobile society contributes to the persistent treatment of Indian groups as though they were independent cultural units in contact with a single wider society. Since the belief of a classless society and the existence of permanently impoverished groups is contradictory, it is much easier in trying to explain the persistence of Indian people's poverty to accept a view that places them outside of North American

1. The sociologist Johnson, for example, suggests that the North American middle classes "deny the existence of social classes...a tendency to play down the great differences in style of life and the inequality of opportunities that exist" (1961:515). In Canada "one of the most persistent images Canadians have of their society is that it has no classes" (Porter, 1968:3).

society, thereby preserving the image of a classless society. Consequently it can be suggested that ideological influences derived from social background predispose anthropologists towards accepting a framework which places Indian people outside the wider society, and therefore contributes to a failure to consider the possibility that Indian people may already be integrated into North American society and that their persistent impoverishment is a product of that integration.

Academic milieu

Anthropologists are subject to common cultural conditions within their profession as well. For example, the process of becoming a professional anthropologist generally entails a prolonged period of socialization during which the candidate absorbs the culture of his discipline. In fulfilling rites de passage, the candidate is subject to a systematic enquiry through examination, thesis, field work, etc., which seeks to gauge his conformity to the accepted precepts of the discipline. He is expected to tackle problems deemed legitimate by his superiors, and to answer them in what they consider to be an "anthropological" manner. Similarly, even after the training has been accomplished, the new professional anthropologist is still subject to pressures to conform. Advancement and security are dependent upon the recognition by others of his professional work. The means by which this recognition is

mainly through publication in recognized journals, which is perhaps most easily accomplished by continued commitment to the concepts, problems and theories of the discipline. This may often entail a direct continuation of graduate work, as publication is often achieved more easily by using earlier work such as a Ph. D. thesis. Furthermore, even if pressures to conform were minimal, the individual is likely to have become so immersed in the concepts and theories of the discipline by the time he chose to pursue professional status that he would find it extremely difficult to step outside them anyway.

As a result, the professional anthropologist tends to be committed to the official problems and structure of his discipline. Such commitment may well have caused the prolonged persistence of acculturation studies. Accompanying this commitment is an orientation towards more generalized beliefs about the nature of anthropology as a science. Two beliefs are of particular relevance to understanding the inability of anthropologists to identify the limitations of the acculturation framework, thereby contributing to its perpetuation: First a belief in what will be called extreme empiricism, and second, a belief that anthropology and social science generally can be value free.

Extreme empiricism

This belief, widely held in anthropology (Manners

and Kaplan, 1968:8; Tyler, 1969:68) assumes that there is a world of "facts" which can be reached without any a priori conceptions on the part of the observer.¹ Once collected, the facts are thought to "speak for themselves" though if the so-called theoretical lag in acculturation studies (identified by the 1954 S.S.R.C.) is any indication, facts can be surprisingly mute. This orientation of anthropology generally, coupled with a tendency to treat field-work as a rite de passage, has contributed to the collection of data as an end in itself, rather than as a means of examining theory (Manners and Kaplan, 1968:2).

In opposition to this extreme empiricism, there is the position that knowledge emerges as a solution to a problem in the course of enquiry (Kaplan, 1964:132-6; Myrdal, 1958:232-3).

"There is "idle" curiosity and "focused" curiosity, but in the world of science there is no such thing as "pure" curiosity" (Lynd, 1964:182-3).

An unavoidable element in any enquiry is the fundamental intent of mind (Mannheim, 1936:296). The selection of a problem around which to orientate an investigation immedia-

1. The roots of this belief in extreme empiricism reach back to an earlier period of historical particularism. E.g. Wissler thought that "a culture is not to be comprehended until the list of its traits approaches completeness" (1923:51). Boas thought that the accumulation of facts would result in the emergence of theory (Wolf, 1970:304; Harris, 1968:262) and Kroeber considered field-work to be carried out with no precepts, and that these would emerge from the data collected (Harris, 1968:320).

tely places a limit on the knowledge which can emerge, and it restricts the kind of work that can be done, the hypotheses that can be suggested, the questions that can be asked, and the models that can be proposed (Edel, 1966:223).

Moreover, problems are not themselves the product of pure contemplation. Rather, they become apparent and significant only within the particular conceptual structure held by the scientist, which of course is not genetically determined but is shaped by his social experience. This position is incompatible with extreme empiricism, for whether or not the investigator is aware of it ethnographic facts are dependent on the conceptual framework within which the problem is stated and the enquiry conducted.

Acculturation studies appear to have been committed to the orientation of extreme empiricism. This is suggested by the general aims of the 1954 S.S.R.C., and by Dohrenwend and Smith (1962), who in recognizing the rapid accumulation of facts sought to provide the basis by which a means of handling them theoretically would emerge. But as suggested earlier acculturation studies have been carried out within a very definite conceptual framework. It stressed the importance of values, the idea of contact, and so on, and excluded from consideration such phenomena as conflict and power differences which are relevant to understanding the contemporary situation of Indian people in the

historical context of North American society.

It is apparent, then, that acculturation studies do not handle "raw" data, but data collected in terms of a particular theoretical framework. This in itself is not objectionable, for such selectivity cannot be avoided, and can be valuable in clarifying assumptions. Difficulties arise only when this selectivity is not recognized. In the case of acculturation studies, it is suggested that a belief in an epistemology of extreme empiricism contributed to an uncritical acceptance of the acculturation framework, by directing attention to the collection of mere facts rather than to an appraisal of the framework itself. In other words, the selectivity imposed by the adoption of a conceptual scheme was not recognized, and the acculturation framework began to appear as a total framework within which all knowledge about culture change could be revealed. This was of course further obscured by reference to assimilation, values and homogeneity. Furthermore, this belief can also be seen as helping to obscure the influence that the social background of anthropologists had in problem conception.

Notion of value neutrality

A second feature of the academic milieu which is relevant to understanding the persistence of acculturation studies is the assumption that anthropology is, or can be, either value free or neutral. Such an assumption has been

held in all the social sciences (Kaplan, 1964:372; Edel, 1966:218; Horowitz, 1968:30; Gouldner, 1966:196). In acculturation studies there seems to have been no attempt at all to consider whether or not value judgements or values per se entered into the conceptual framework. The position complements the extreme empiricism mentioned above, for if the ethnographic facts are supposed to "speak for themselves" then it is reasonable to assume that cultural facts will impose no culturally biased value judgements. Since facts cannot be reified in this way, and do not "speak for themselves", the assumption of possible value neutrality in social science can find no justification in extreme ethnographic empiricism.

There seems to be little justification for holding this view. The fundamental importance of problem selection in the character of knowledge that emerges from an enquiry has been mentioned. Because of this, it follows that the basis upon which problems are selected, i.e. what constitutes a significant question, is of vital importance. As criteria of significance involve some form of evaluation the matter becomes an unavoidable element in any research project (Werkmeister, 1959:503; Furfey, 1959:515; Mannheim, 1936:296):

"Whatever problems a scientist selects, he selects for a reason, and those reasons can be expected to relate to his values, or to the values of those who in one way or the other influence his choice" (Kaplan, 1964:381).

Hence in the very act of selecting a problem, the value of a certain type of knowledge is being implicitly or explicitly advocated.

Problem selection is one fairly obvious point at which evaluation is unavoidable. Other possible points of entry are through an underlying image of man (Edel, 1966), in what is taken to be basic social fact (Bendix and Berger, 1959:93), and criteria of objectivity (Furfey, 1959:511-2; Popper, 1957:205). All this points to the view that the use of evaluations in the acculturation framework is unavoidable. This does not mean, however, that objectivity is lost, for this requires merely that such evaluations be controlled, not that they be utterly avoided (Kaplan, 1964:376; Mannheim, 1936:296).

It is suggested here that acceptance of the myth of a value free social science has been detrimental to anthropological thought, in that it has contributed to a failure of anthropologists to work out the implications for their own knowledge of the recognition of cultural influences on cognition. It has led to the failure to recognize that anthropological thought is not immune from cultural influences, and that as a result anthropological knowledge is knowledge from a particular viewpoint.¹ Reco-

1. Recognition of this is not new. E.g. Marx whose work on Ideology was the forerunner of the sociology of knowledge recognized that there are "only particular standpoints corresponding to forms of society" (Lichtheim, 1965:20).

gnition of this does not entail a flight into subjectivism, for in the final analysis theories do have to have empirical referents. There seems to be little justification for the idea of value neutrality, hence one can conclude that its widespread acceptance is a consequence of situational influences.¹ More specifically, it is suggested that the idea of value neutrality has contributed to the persistent acceptance of the acculturation framework, in that it has prevented recognition of the extent to which situational influences have entered the framework. Consequently it has contributed to the belief that acculturation would provide the theory of change, and therefore a failure to recognize that the acculturation framework embodies a particular viewpoint.

To illustrate these arguments, it is appropriate now to show the way in which the acculturation framework embodies a particular viewpoint, deriving from specific class and academic affiliations, which is inherently conservative in that it embodies a positive evaluation of the status quo of North American society. The entry of this evaluation can be clearly seen in examining the part the structure of North American society plays in these studies.

1. In this respect, Gouldner argues that "one of the main institutional forces facilitated the survival and spread of the value-free myth was its usefulness in maintaining both the cohesion and autonomy of the modern university" (1966:199).

As mentioned above, acculturation analysis has always focused on the native group alone, and failure to enquire into the structure of North American society too results in a tendency to take it for granted, and to assume that it is among other things permanent and unchanging. Coupled with the belief that acculturation processes lead to growing similarity, this results in the ethnocentric assumption that the only changes that Indian people can make is in the direction of a growing similarity with North American society. (One may note the continuity with nineteenth century evolutionary theories which portray Western civilization as having reached the highest level of evolutionary development). In other words, acculturation became synonymous with general, desired change towards homogeneous, classless, highly mobile North American society. An example of the influence of this ethnocentric position can be found in the treatment in the framework of Nativistic Movements and Pan- Indian movements, as though they were aberrations temporarily holding back the processes of acculturation (cf Chapter Three). Reinforced by the framework's basic dualism, and its emphasis on the unity and continuity of traditional culture, together with a stress on the autonomy of cultures in contact, anthropologists seem to have become victims of the illusion that by analyzing the Indian group they were dealing with something outside the structure of North American society, and that the wider and dominant society was therefore largely irrelevant to the problems

with which they were concerned.

It should be pointed out that it is not only in acculturation studies that such an evaluation is made. For example, Lynd claims that the tendency in social science generally is to accept institutional things and their associated values as given (1964:184). Similarly, Mills argues that in concerning themselves with practical problems, sociologists seldom consider the possibility that individuals caught in underprivileged situations can achieve their goals without changes in the basic institutional structure of society (1968:179). Finally, Horowitz suggests that, in ignoring the structure of the wider society, one facilitates the belief in value neutrality, whereas in fact values have not disappeared, and social scientists have instead become identified with the established order (1968:45).

In taking the structure of North American society for granted, an extremely significant value judgement is made, which involves an implicit commitment to restrict attention to the Indian group itself. The importance of this commitment can be seen clearly in the limitations it imposes on the discussion to the solutions of problems faced by Indian people. By treating the "wider" society as a non-variable in analysis, the range of solutions to such problems is limited to changes within the Indian groups themselves, while the possibility that solutions

might entail changes in the wider society is excluded from consideration.

The influence of this arbitrary limitation of context can be seen in the two broad solutions to the question of the economic development of Indian people. These are assimilation and cultural pluralism. Fusion, a third possibility mentioned in Chapter Two, is not considered for it entails the development of a new society from the fusion of two or more in contact, whereas in studies of North American Indians the wider society is accepted as given, and therefore fusion is not a possible alternative.

Assimilation as a solution assumes that the failure of Indian people to emancipate themselves from their persistent poverty is a direct consequence of their persistent adherence to traditional Indian culture, or to their acculturation to the culture of rural lower class Whites. Stated this way, the solution to the problem is simply one of taking over in toto the values, beliefs, and customs of the urban White Man.

Alternatively the framework allows for cultural pluralism, which in terms of overcoming impoverishment means the survival and economic advancement of a distinct Indian group. This may take a variety of forms, such as Red Capitalism, cooperatives, inducement of outside capital to re-

servations, etc. But even here, the successful operation of such ventures requires integration and acceptance of the economic structure of North American society. Indian people would still have to make the changes necessary to make their investments attractive in the eyes of financial interests. Under such circumstances, it is questionable what, if anything, would remain of an Indian way of life. The acculturation framework, it can be noted, suggests its eventual demise, for cultural pluralism is no more than a case of arrested assimilation (cf. Chapter Two) which slows down the acculturation process.

In either of these solutions the acculturation framework places the onus of change on the Indian group itself. The implicit evaluation adopted without analysis is that the cause of the problems faced by Indian people is to be found in the Indian people themselves, and not in North American society. As McNickle and Fey put it, the Indian people have to be induced to change their ways and adjust to the needs of North American society (1959:197). Similarly, Gulick suggests that the Harmony Ethic of the conservative Cherokee should be discarded or modified because it prevents effective participation in the market economy (1960:158). Levine suggests that Indian culture is not incompatible with the values of North American society, and do not therefore have to be changed. However, he does suggest that if it were incompatible with, or constituted

a threat to, North American society as a whole, the social and cultural structure of the Indian group would have to be changed (1970:15).

In focusing attention on individual Indian groups, the acculturation framework excludes from consideration radical changes, and instead stresses slow, small-scale changes which do not effect the structure of North American society. Anything other than such small-scale changes might jeopardize the stability of North American society, and this would be incompatible with the evaluation placed upon it. In other words, in as much as they have adopted the acculturation framework or its assumptions, anthropologists have also adopted a disguised moral stance which is not derived from an impersonal appraisal of the actual situation. The result is that the acculturation framework involves analysis of the situation of Indian people from a particular viewpoint, one which is inherently conservative.

It can be noted that acculturation studies are not alone in embodying a conservative set of ideas. Bata-
lla brings out the relevance of this point in the context of applied anthropology in Latin America. He argues that the conceptual frameworks of such studies inevitably include a tendency to interpret social realities in psychological terms (1966:89). As the acculturation framework does, most studies refer to the ideas, beliefs and so on

held by individuals in the communities under study, and solutions to problems are inevitably seen in terms of remotivating the individual under study. He also points out other elements of this conservative trend of thought, such as a belief in multiple causality, failure to consider radical change, etc., adherence to which he considers detrimental to the national interests of the countries studied (1966:89).

The latter remark points to the wider significance of the evaluations embodied in the acculturation framework. In focusing attention on the Indian group alone, they are at the same time inviting others to do so. This limitation of context is therefore an act of social intervention, as it helps to ensure that other things remain unequal and unchanged, focusing attention entirely upon "the Indian problem", Indian resistance to change, Indian dependence, and solutions within this context. In other words, in as much as the conceptual framework of acculturation studies has been taken over by the administrators of Indian people (or supports the beliefs they already hold), and is taken over by Indian people themselves, it can be seen as contributing to the control of the Indian people by others. By attributing the multiplicity of causes of problems and their solutions to the Indian group itself, it ensures that any changes made will not entail changes in the wider society. From such a viewpoint it could not

be asked whether or not these are structural features of North American society which guarantee failure to raise economic well-being and result in such consequences as drinking, family breakdown, poverty, etc. In this case, it would not be an "Indian problem", but a social problem faced by Indian people along with others in the larger context of North American society.

Anthropologists have long recognized that the "Indian problem" is also a "White problem", and have often made themselves available to Indian people to help fight what they saw as injustices. This is not in question. What is in question is the conceptual framework of acculturation studies, for it is this framework which contains the biases mentioned. In as much as an individual anthropologist has accepted the focus, or fails to break away from it and see its limitations, he too will be accepting its implicit evaluations and solutions, no matter where his individual sympathies may lie.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The significance of analyzing acculturation studies lies in the fact that anthropologists have invested considerable time and effort in them, in spite of which the results can only be described as trivial. They have, moreover, been unable to provide an adequate basis for understanding significant contemporary problems. In both respects this criticism may be applied to anthropology generally (Becker, 1971:98; Wolf, 1970:17; Batalla, 1966:89).

It is suggested here that this paucity of theoretical or practical results can be best explained in terms of certain features of the academic environment. This differs from attempts to explain failures by attributing them to the fact that anthropology is a "young science", its "lack of methodological sophistication", the "complexity of its subject matter", and so forth. These suggestions make more adequate rationalizations of failure than explanations.

The point was made in the preceeding chapter that the way in which the social scientist comes to see the world is not the product of pure contemplation of untainted facts, nor of a priori conceptions somehow inherent in the mind. Instead, the social scientist experiences the world in terms of a perspective which the individual inherits in

a particular historical situation.¹ The knowledge emerging from a perspective is partial, reflecting an aspect of external reality which is visible from the particular standpoint of the investigator (Maquet, 1964:54). By regarding the conceptual framework of acculturation studies as a perspective taken over by anthropologists in the course of their training, the inability of acculturationists to overcome their own problems and produce meaningful results can be understood.

In seeking to understand the contemporary situation of Indian people in North America, anthropologists embody in their analysis a largely unexamined set of assumptions and ideas, the acceptance of which seems to have been shaped by their social background rather than truth value (cf. Chapter Four). The result of their failure to critically assess these assumptions and ideas was that concepts which should liberate anthropologists from their preconceptions inhibited their work instead.

As suggested in Chapter Three, the result of working within this framework was to distort reality and to inadvertently exclude from consideration certain concepts and points of view because they were incompatible with that

1. The concept of perspective was developed by Mannheim from Marx's concept of Ideology, and essentially signifies "the manner in which one views an object, what one perceives in it, and how one construes it in his thinking" (Mannheim, 1936:272).

perspective.

A further consequence of uncritically accepting a particular perspective is that it unavoidably entails the use of unrecognized evaluations, as was shown in Chapter Four. This is most apparent in the image of the dominant society incorporated in acculturation analysis, which reflects beliefs held by some North Americans about their society. The fact that these beliefs are false does not detract from the significance of the evaluation. The acculturation framework in effect legitimates the policy of government towards Indian people. It provides a "scientific" justification for treating Indian people as not quite "Westernized" wards, and for the existence of a "civilizing" agency. It depicts as permanent reality the structures which confront Indian people, and this inadvertently contributes to their control for it locates the causes of the "Indian problem" within the Indian people themselves.

By adopting the acculturation perspective and thereby its implicit evaluations and extreme empiricism (see Chapter Four), anthropologists have inadvertently restricted their achievements to little more than a description of the status quo. The perspective does not facilitate the consideration of alternatives to the existing structure of North American society, and so the future of Indian people can at best be seen in terms of remaining as

they are or becoming what Cardinal calls "brown white men" (Cardinal, 1969:11). The perspective embodies an orientation towards adjustments to the existing structure of society, and does not raise questions of the adequacy or desirability of that structure, taking it as given. But even this limited aim was not the central concern of acculturation studies. Apart from within the field of applied anthropology, acculturationists have above all been engaged in a search for universal laws of process. Such a search is bound to fail, for it does not recognize that a perspective is shaped by a particular social and historical situation. In as much as the reality which social scientists deal with changes, there is no certainty that the laws or categories of thought of a particular perspective will remain adequate. In other words, the conceptual apparatus developed in relation to one set of problems at a particular point in time are not necessarily adequate for another period and new problems.¹ A consequence of focusing attention on a search for the universal laws of change was that acculturation studies became an end in themselves. They lacked a clearly defined problem against which they could unambiguously measure the adequacy of the framework and determine its limitations. When the expected laws did not emerge, the result was a search for more accurate techniques for sifting the

1. "the problems enter into how we construct the picture of reality around which we organize our common understandings. As that reality shifts and changes, so our responses to it must shift and change"(Wolf, 1970:11).

data; the perspective itself remained unquestioned. The result was a proliferation of empirical data which could not be adequately handled.

These features are not peculiar to acculturation studies, but seem to characterize much of anthropology. For instance, Becker suggests that the study of social process has become an end in itself (1971:118), and that anthropology does little more than further itself as a discipline, feeding on its own subject matter (p. 106).¹ Yet the anthropologists of the 1930's had a broader aim, for it was thought that documentation of cultural differences would lead to a better understanding and control of their own culture (Lynd, 1964:158). But if acculturation studies are any indication even this aim is limited, for existing structures tend to be frozen into permanent realities and taken for granted. This seems to be the general orientation stemming from historical particularism; Boas, its principal architect, was concerned with studying the "rules of the game, not the game itself" (Goldschmidt, 1959:3). This restricted vision excludes the focus suggested by Wolf, in which attention may be turned towards determining what is possible as well as

1. This reflects a failure by anthropologists to address themselves to the question of "science for what purpose and for whom" (Gough, 1968:16). This failure is not unique to anthropology, nor particularly new, for it was raised in 1939 by Lynd (1964) in Knowledge for What? in terms of social science generally.

probable within a given social order.¹ It also directs attention away from what has been seen as one of the central questions in the study of man, the explanation of differences in human freedom (Becker, 1971:120).

Despite an awareness of the extent to which cultural differences influence cognition, there has been practically no attempt to turn this insight towards their own work. Consequently there has been little appreciation of the fact that cultural anthropologists tend to work within a particular perspective, or of the limitations caused by adherence to it. The results of this neglect are epitomized in acculturation studies, where although acculturationists have criticized their own work the criticisms themselves reflect a dependence on the basic assumptions and ideas of the perspective. This was seen, for instance, in the supposedly radical attempt of the 1954 S.S.R.C. to redirect acculturation studies, and which was in fact no more than an elaboration of earlier thought patterns (cf. Chapter Two). The result of such limited criticism is either piecemeal modification or the abandonment of acculturation studies without understanding their failure, which in either case does not facilitate the recognition of or emancipation from the perspective underlying the

1. "But in these pages I have also claimed for anthropology both a greater opportunity and a greater obligation: the creation of an image of man that will be adequate to the experience of our time" (Wolf, 1964:94).

studies.

In this respect criticism of the acculturation perspective is of more general significance, for it can be found in much cultural anthropology. The conceptual framework underlying acculturation studies does not simply belong to a special subfield of anthropology marked off by clearly defined boundaries. It represents the application of certain assumptions and ideas derived from cultural anthropology to a particular problem area. This is further supported by the fact that acculturation studies have remained important for such a prolonged period, lacking any fundamental criticism. This makes little sense unless it is granted that the basic elements of the perspective were shared by cultural anthropologists in general.

As suggested in Chapter Four, the general lack of criticism which existed despite the repeated failure of the acculturation perspective is related to the social background of anthropologists. The inability of anthropologists to overcome the problems of anthropologists epitomized in acculturation studies point to the importance of conditions prevailing within the academic community,¹ for

1. The question of how academic conditions are related to the institutional structure of society has not been raised in this thesis. E.g. Blumer points out the dangers of agency-determined research, epitomized in Project Camelot, where the premises underlying the project, the problem itself, and the dominant ideas that gave the study its character and direction were determined by the agency's response to its own practical interests (Blumer, 1967:159).

it is the academic community that accepts and perpetuates a particular perspective. The training of graduate students and the career exigencies of professional anthropologists (cf. Chapter Four) are relevant here, for they result in a tendency to accept uncritically and to elaborate upon inherited modes of thought, this being the easiest way to achieve professional advancement. There are pressures towards the selection of problems that can be handled with the least difficulty so that results may be rapidly written up for degree requirements or publications. This inhibits any questioning of the fundamental structure of knowledge in the discipline, and points to the acceptance of an "anthropological perspective" whose value is taken as being self-evident. The result, as epitomized in acculturation studies, is an institutionalized incapacity to reconceptualize old questions or to ask new ones which are significant to the contemporary world.

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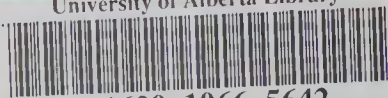
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